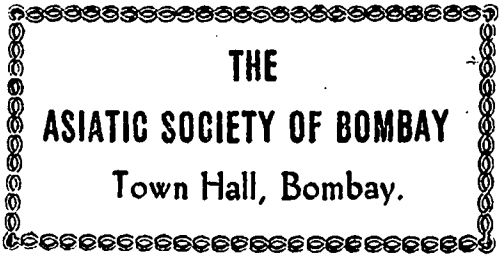
00029821



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 March, 2016

HISTORY OF EUROPE

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

FALL OF NAPOLEON

IN MDCCCXV

TO THE

ACCESSION OF LOUIS NAPOLEON

IN MDCCCLII

B.1303

29821 aC

BY

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON, BART., D.C.L.

Author of the "History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution, in 1789, to the Battle of Waterloo," &c. &c.

VOL. VII.

55 & 1

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLVIII

940.28
Ali / His
29821

The Author of this Work reserves the right of translating it.

CONTENTS OF VOL. VII.

CHAPTER XLI.

ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF SIR R. PEEL TO POWER IN NOVEMBER 1841, TO THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN JUNE 1844.

§		Page
1.	Character of Sir R. Peel, so variously represented,	1
2.	Causes of this diversity,	2
3.	Injustice of these extreme opinions on both sides,	3
4.	He did not want political courage,	4
5.	He had no original genius, and was not a leader of thought,	5
6.	His style of oratory,	7
7.	His administrative powers,	8
8.	Great merit of his opposition to Reform,	9
9.	Ambition was not the cause of his versatility of principle,	*ib.*
10.	Real explanation of his conduct,	10
11.	His views on the Currency,	12
12.	Explanation thus afforded of his political career,	13
13.	His character in private life,	14
14.	Formation of the new Ministry,	15
15.	Immense difficulties of the country in foreign affairs,	17
16.	Still darker prospect in internal affairs,	19
17.	Statistical details proving the distress,	20
18.	Immense difficulties in finan. ; and from the inadequate national armaments,	22
19.	Great distress in the manufacturing districts,	23
20.	Serious riots in England in autumn 1842,	24
21.	Still more serious riots in Scotland,	25
22.	Measures of repression adopted,	26
23.	Their effects, and results of the strike,	27
24.	Skilful use made of these circumstances,	28
25.	Opposite arguments adduced by the Anti-Corn-Law League, and real causes of the distress,	29
26.	Short session of 1841,	30
27.	Opening of the Parliament of 1842,	31
28-33.	Sir R. Peel's plan,	32-37
34.	The Ministerial plan,	38

§		Page
35-39.	Answer of Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston,	38-41
40	The bill passes both Houses, and various amendments are thrown out,	42
41.	Reception of the measure in the country,	43
42.	Financial difficulties of Sir R. Peel,	*ib.*
43-48.	Sir R. Peel's speech on introducing his financial measures,	44-48
49.	Reception of the plan by the Opposition and the country,	49
50-54.	Argument against the income-tax,	50-53
55.	The bill passes, and its reception by the country,	54
56.	Reflections on the Tariff, and reasons for it,	55
57.	It might have been easily obviated by an extension of the Currency,	56
58.	The income-tax was justifiable,	57
59.	But this made the tax on perishable incomes more unjust,	*ib.*
60.	Reasons of this injustice being committed,	58
61.	Peel's heroic conduct on the Affghanistan disaster,	59
62.	Lord Mahon's Copyright Bill	60
63.	Reflections on this Act,	61
64.	Extension of the dangers of literature,	62
65.	The Temperance Movement in Ireland,	63
66.	Progress and decline of the movement,	64
67.	Commencement of the Repeal agitation,	65
68.	Monster meetings,	67
69.	Character of these meetings, and language used at them,	*ib.*
70.	Measures of Government, and Arms Bill,	69
71.	The Clontarf meeting is stopped, and O'Connell arrested,	70
72.	Trial and conviction of O'Connell,	71
73.	Reversal of the sentence,	72
74.	Effects of this decision,	73
75.	His subsequent career and death,	74
76.	Fine harvest of 1842, and gradual improvement in the country in 1843,	75
77.	General improvement in the country,	77
78.	Parliamentary measures of 1843. Lord Ashley's Bills for Infant Labour,	78
79.	Sir James Graham's unsuccessful Factory and Education Bill,	79
80.	New Factory Bill, and Lord Ashley's Ten-hours' amendment,	80
81.	Reflections on this subject,	82
82.	Rebecca riots,	83
83.	Increase of the riots,	85
84.	Termination of the troubles, and bill removing their cause,	*ib.*
85.	The Chartist and Anti-Corn-Law movements,	86
86.	Differences with America,	87
87.	Question of the right of search,	88
88.	The question is settled by Lord Aberdeen,	90
89.	Dispute about the Maine boundary: Its origin,	91
90.	Proceedings regarding the dispute,	93
91.	Terms of the treaty, and its reception in Great Britain,	94
92.	Reflections on it,	95
93.	The Oregon question: Its history,	96
94.	Conclusion of a treaty,	97
95.	Its terms,	99
96.	Reflections on these Treaties,	100
97.	Origin of the Otaheite dispute with France,	*ib.*
98.	Interference of the French missionaries,	101

§		Page
99.	The French take possession of Otaheite,	102
100.	Affair of Mr Pritchard, which complicates the case,	103
101.	The matter is adjusted,	105
102.	Spanish marriages,	106
103.	Reduction of the 3½ per cents,	*ib.*
104.	Favourable financial statement of 1844,	107
105.	Reduction of taxes,	108
106.	Reduction of Sugar Duties,	109
107.	Bank Charter Act,	110
108-111.	Sir R. Peel's argument in support of his Bill,	111-113
112-113.	Argument against the Bill,	114-116
114.	The Bill passes both Houses,	116
115.	Similar bills for Scotland and Ireland,	117
116.	Reflections on this debate,	118
117.	What was not foreseen,	119
118.	Visit of the King of the French to England,	120
119.	Visit of the Emperor Nicholas,	121
120.	Political objects of the visit,	122

CHAPTER XLII.

ENGLAND FROM THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN 1844 TO THE FALL OF SIR R. PEEL'S MINISTRY IN JUNE 1846.

1.	Public prosperity and the railway mania,	124
2.	The Railway Mania,	126
3.	Effects of the mania on society,	127
4.	Effects on the public mind,	128
5.	Its immediate benefits to some classes,	129
6.	Great effect of these speculations in the country,	130
7.	Division in the landed interest occasioned by the railway mania,	132
8.	Good effects of the railway mania on the labouring classes,	133
9.	Effects of the railway system on commerce and manufactures,	134
10.	Beneficial effect of the railway system on the working classes,	136
11.	Bill passes reducing railway deposits to a half,	137
12.	Its vast effect in stimulating these undertakings,	138
13.	Flourishing state of trade and the revenue,	*ib.*
14.	Sir R. Peel's favourable financial statement,	139
15.	Continuance of the Income-tax, and repeal of more indirect taxes,	140
16-17.	Mr Baring's objection to it,	142-143
18.	The bill is carried by a large majority,	144
19.	Reflections on this measure,	*ib.*
20.	Causes of this great change,	145
21.	Increase in Irish agrarian crime,	146
22.	Grant to secular colleges,	147
23.	Enlarged grant to Maynooth College,	149
24.	Reflections on this measure, and its failure,	150
25.	Causes of this,	*ib.*
26.	Scotch Poor-Law Bill: History of the subject,	151
27.	Causes of the law being evaded,	152

§		Page
28.	The evils of this at last become intolerable,	153
29.	Provisions of the bill,	155
30.	Proof afforded by experience of the good effected by the bill,	159
31.	Charge against Sir James Graham of opening letters,	*ib.*
32.	The Alien Act,	160
33.	Progress of the Anti-Corn-Law League,	161
34.	Division on Mr Miles' motion,	162
35.	Further divisions on the Corn Laws, and close of the session,	163
36.	The change had become unavoidable, from the Monetary and Free-trade systems,	164
37.	Advantages and dangers of the potato as the food of man,	165
38.	First appearance of the potato rot,	167
39.	Increased efforts of the Anti-Corn-Law League,	168
40.	General alarm, and symptoms of change,	169
41-43.	Lord John Russell's Letter,	170-172
44.	Approach to a repeal of the Corn Laws, and resignation of Sir R. Peel,	172
45.	Failure of Lord John Russell to form a government, and restoration of Sir R. Peel's Cabinet,	173
46.	Announcement of the repeal of the Corn Laws in the *Times*,	175
47.	Queen's Speech,	*ib.*
48-55.	Sir R. Peel's argument in favour of Free Trade,	176-183
56.	Reception of the measure in the country,	184
57-58.	Mr Disraeli's caustic remarks,	185-186
59-64.	Arguments against the bill,	187-191
65.	Result of the debate,	192
66.	Duke of Wellington's speech on the bill,	193
67.	Cause of this inconsistency,	194
68.	The Budget for 1846,	195
69.	Determination of the Protectionists to drive Sir R. Peel from power,	196
70.	Increased agrarian outrages in Ireland,	*ib.*
71.	Coalition of parties against the Government,	198
72.	Progress of the bill,	199
73-76.	Argument in support of the bill,	200-202
77-80.	Answer of the Coalition against the bill,	204-206
81.	The bill is thrown out by a majority of 73,	207
82.	Mr Disraeli's account of the scene,	208
83.	Sir R. Peel resolves to resign,	209
84-85.	Sir R. Peel's concluding address,	210-211
86.	Reflections on his free-trade measures,	212
87.	Was a return to the Corn Laws, after the famine was over, practicable?	*ib.*
88.	The danger of scarcity had passed away before the bill was brought forward,	213
89.	Durable reasons for the repeal of the Corn Laws,	215
90.	Real free-trade was not introduced, but protection taken from agriculture,	216
91.	Strange conduct of the Irish members on the Corn Law question,	218
92.	The Duke of Wellington's characteristic conduct,	220
93.	This will not apply to Sir R. Peel,	221
94.	What were the alleviating circumstances of his case,	223

CHAPTER XLIII.

ENGLAND FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF FREE TRADE AND FALL OF SIR R. PEEL IN JUNE 1846, TO THE SUPPRESSION OF THE CHARTIST INSURRECTION IN APRIL 1848.

§		Page
1.	Vast effects of the introduction of Free Trade,	225
2.	Both the Whigs and the Tories were destroyed by their own leaders,	226
3.	Causes which led to these changes,	227
4.	Formation of the new Cabinet,	228
5-8.	Government plan for the sugar-duties,	229-232
9-15.	Argument of the Protectionists on the other side,	233-239
16.	Sir R. Peel's singular conduct, and passing of the bill,	239
17.	Result of this measure to the West Indies,	240
18.	Effect on the slave trade,	242
19.	Explanation of this given by foreign writers,	243
20.	Real explanation of it,	244
21.	Proof of the colonies having been disfranchised by the Reform Bill,	245
22.	Discussion on flogging in the army,	246
23.	Motion on the subject, and Wellington's order,	247
24.	Reflections on this subject,	249
25.	Difference in the composition of the British and foreign armies,	250
26.	Necessity of corporal punishment in the field,	251
27.	Lord Palmerston's Cabinet minute on the defences of the country,	252
28.	Wellington's measure for enrolling the pensioners,	255
29.	Arms bill for Ireland,	256
30.	Sir R. Peel's measures for the relief of the Irish suffering, and those of Lord J. Russell,	258
31.	Commencement of the Irish famine,	259
32.	Deplorable and alarming state of the country,	261
33.	Government plans on the subject,	262
34.	Enormous extent of the distress,	264
35.	Woeful scenes in the country,	265
36.	Her Majesty's speech on opening Parliament,	266
37.	Ministerial plan for the Irish relief,	267
38.	Description of the calamity by Lord Brougham,	268
39.	Ministerial plan for the relief of Ireland,	269
40.	Amended Poor and Temporary Relief Act, 10 and 11 Victoria, c. 7,	270
41.	Immense relief afforded under this Act in Ireland,	272
42.	Ratio of indigent persons relieved,	273
43.	Great mortality of this period,	274
44.	Immense pecuniary efforts made in Great Britain,	275
45.	Vast extent of the emigration from Ireland,	276
46.	Still greater emigration to foreign parts,	277
47.	Effects of this exodus on the Irish population,	279
48.	Which arose mainly from free-trade measures,	280
49.	Voluntary relief in Ireland, and causes of its small amount,	282
50.	Reflections on the Irish famine,	283
51.	Potato famine in Scotland at this period,	284
52.	Means taken in Scotland to combat it,	285

§		Page
53.	Lord George Bentinck's project for Irish railways,	286
54-58.	His railway scheme,	287-290
59.	It is opposed by Ministers,	291
60-62.	Sir R. Peel's speech against the measure,	291-293
63.	Division on the subject, and reflections on it,	294
64.	Character of Lord George Bentinck,	295
65.	His family, and early history,	296
66.	His mental qualities,	297
67.	What gave him this rapid ascendancy,	298
68.	His private character and habits,	*ib.*
69.	The Budget of 1847,	299
70.	Its details,	300
71.	Causes which led to the approach of a monetary crisis,	301
72.	Great effect of the Irish famine,	303
73.	Progress of the panic,	304
74.	Difference between this and former crises,	305
75-78.	Lord G. Bentinck's and Mr Baring's argument on the subject of the crisis,	305-308
79-82.	Answer of the Government and Sir R. Peel,	309-312
83.	Nothing followed on this debate,	313
84.	Reflections on it,	*ib.*
85.	Debate on the Navigation Laws,	315
86-88.	Mr Fielden's bill to limit factory labour,	315-317
89-90.	Answer of Sir R. Peel, Sir James Graham, and Mr Cobden,	318-319
91.	The bill passes both Houses,	320
92.	Reflections on this measure,	*ib.*
93.	Vast difference in the mortality of manufacturing towns and the country,	322
94.	Introduction of a system of limited service,	324
95.	Which passes into law,	325
96.	Public education,	326
97.	New Coercion Bill for Ireland,	328
98.	Prorogation and dissolution of Parliament,	330
99.	Commercial embarrassments,	331
100.	Increased monetary pressure in August,	332
101.	Commercial bankruptcies,	333
102.	Suspension of the Bank Charter Act,	334
103.	Reflections on this change,	336
104.	Great and immediate effect of this letter,	337
105.	Meeting of Parliament, and Queen's Speech,	339
106-108.	Sir R. Peel's statement on the Bank Charter Act,	340-342
109-111.	Answer of Lord G. Bentinck and Mr Thomas Baring,	343-344
112.	Result of the debate,	345
113.	Reflections on this debate,	346
114.	Great distress in the country from the monetary crisis,	348
115.	Details of the railway and mercantile losses,	349
116.	Rise in cotton, from the crash of 1839 in America,	350
117.	Vast variations in the price of provisions,	351
118.	Pernicious effect of the French Revolution of 1848,	352
119.	Immense influx of destitute Irish into Western Britain,	*ib.*
120.	Extreme severity of the pressure on the middle classes,	353
121.	Immediate benefits of the railway expenditure,	355

§ Page
122. Magnitude and perfection of the railway system in Britain, . . 357
123. Fall in the exports and revenue, ... 358
124. Great increase of paupers and criminals, ... 359
125. Increase of crime, emigration, and decline of population, . . 360
126. Extreme suffering in Glasgow and the manufacturing districts, . 362
127. Outbreak in Glasgow in March 1848, ... 363
128. Further riots, and their suppression, ... 364
129. Good effects of this success, ... 366
130. Commencement of the Chartist insurrection, ... 367
131. Preparations of the Chartists, ... 368
132. Vigorous preparations in the Government, ... 369
133. Defeat of the Chartists, ... 371
134. Abortive attempt at insurrection in Glasgow, ... 372
135. Detection of the frauds in the Chartist petition, . . . 373
136. Immense sensation this produced on the Continent, . . . 374
137. Renewed agitation by the Chartists, and its suppression, and their trials, 375
138. Preparations for a rebellion in Ireland, ... 376
139. Total defeat of the rebellion, ... 378
140. Trial of O'Brien, and revealing of the designs of the conspirators, . 379
141. Immense effects of the monetary crisis of 1847, ... 382
142. Lesson which it taught the British people, ... 383
143. The monetary crisis was owing to Free Trade and a Fettered Currency, *ib.*
144. Dangers of Free Trade and a Fettered Currency, ... 384
145. Which keeps the nation constantly on the verge of a monetary crisis, 386
146. A great increase in the supply of gold postpones, but does not avert this danger, ... *ib.*
147. Argument on the other side as to the export of gold, ... 388
148. Danger of gold passing merely through the richer States, . . . 390
149. Erroneous argument of the bullionists on this subject, . . . 391
150. The monetary crisis of 1847 was owing to Free Trade and the monetary laws, ... 392
151. Sir Robert Peel's object in the Act of 1844, ... 394
152. The very opposite effects have followed, ... *ib.*
153. Way in which the monetary laws inflamed speculation, . . . 395
154. Ultimate effects of Free Trade, irrespective of the Currency, . . 396
155. Capital facilitates manufactures far more than agriculture, . . 397
156. Everything that is plentiful becomes cheap, ... 398
157. Greater mortality of cities than rural districts, ... 399
158. Manner in which these circumstances arrest population, . . 400
159. Effect of these laws combined, ... 401
160. Free Trade induces at first cheap prices of food, and then often famine prices, ... 402
161. Free Trade was forced upon Sir R. Peel, ... 405
162. Effects of this system on national progress and independence, . 406
163. Protection must continue to be the policy of young and growing states, 407
164. Which is the result, on their part, of necessity, ... 408
165. The effects of Free Trade must be judged of before 1852, . . 409
166. Necessity of maritime superiority to the present existence of Britain, 411

CHAPTER XLIV.

FRANCE FROM THE TREATY OF FEBRUARY 13, 1841, TO THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF ORLEANS IN JULY 1843.

§		Page
1.	Prosperous condition of France in 1841,	413
2.	Great material prosperity of the period,	414
3.	Universal thirst for gain,	416
4.	Accumulating feelings of discontent in the working classes,	417
5.	Great magnitude of the deficits in the revenue,	418
6.	Increasing discontent of the working classes,	419
7.	Trifling subjects in debate in the Chamber, and serious objects of Thiers,	420
8.	Objects of general thought and interest at the same time,	421
9.	Cause to which this divergence was owing,	*ib.*
10.	The Chamber of Peers afforded no remedy for these evils,	423
11.	Extreme danger of this state of things,	424
12.	Great mistake committed in the national education,	*ib.*
13.	Its irreligious character led it to run into Socialism,	425
14.	Blindness of the Government and the higher classes to the Socialist dangers,	426
15.	Corruption and influence became the great engine of Government,	427
16.	The Liberals exert all their efforts to discredit the Government,	428
17.	Louis Blanc's picture of France at this period,	429
18.	Spread of Socialist principles, and their origin,	430
19.	Which was aided by the want of an adequate currency,	431
20.	Which led to a general demand for Parliamentary Reform,	*ib.*
21.	Strong feeling excited in regard to the subservience of France to England,	432
22.	Different object on which the attention of Government was set,	433
23.	Position and movements of the Catholic clergy,	434
24-27.	Speech of M. Arago on Parliamentary Reform,	435-437
28-29.	Answer of M. Thiers,	438
30.	Reflections on this debate,	439
31.	Great succession of Reform Banquets,	440
32.	Banquet at Chatillon,	441
33.	Growing importance of the question of wages,	442
34-35.	Speech of M. Arago on the subject,	442-443
36.	Commencement of combination and riot in Paris,	444
37.	Serious riots in September,	445
38.	Vigorous measures of Government to suppress the insurgents,	446
39.	Causes which produced this outbreak among the working classes,	447
40.	Temporary causes which also concurred,	*ib.*
41.	Effect of the general monetary crisis,	448
42.	Total failure of the attempt to make private railway lines in France,	449
43.	The Government undertake the lines,	*ib.*
44.	Disastrous state of the finances in consequence,	450
45.	Speech of M. Humann on the finances,	451
46.	Untoward commencement of the Ministry of M. Guizot,	452
47.	Efforts of England for suppression of the slave trade,	453
48.	Treaties of 1831 and 1833 with France regarding the slave trade,	454
49.	Treaty of December 20, 1841, between France and the Allied Powers,	455

§		Page
50.	Its provisions,	456
51.	Indignation which the treaty excited in France and America,	*ib.*
52.	Interdiction of the Polish Banquet,	458
53.	Publication of letters ascribed to Louis Philippe,	459
54.	Prosecutions against the editors who published the papers,	461
55.	Ambiguity in regard to the authorship of the letters,	462
56.	Debate on Reform, and its refusal,	463
57.	Law on literary property defeated,	465
58.	First step in France in the cause of Free Trade,	466
59.	M. Humann's picture of the disastrous state of the finances,	467
60.	Expedient of a new valuation,	468
61.	Extreme discontent produced by the new "Recensement,"	470
62.	Serious troubles at Toulouse,	471
63.	Suppression of the disturbances,	472
64.	Death of M. Garnier Pagès, and election of M. Ledru-Rollin,	473
65.	Prosecution and acquittal of Ledru-Rollin,	*ib.*
66.	Attempted assassination of the Dukes of Orléans and Nemours,	474
67.	Moral complicity: its dangerous tendency,	475
68.	Debate on Electoral Reform in the Council of State,	476
69.	Movement in favour of reform in the Chamber,	477
70-75.	Argument in favour of Parliamentary Reform,	478-481
76-77.	Lamartine's reply,	482-483
78.	Reflections on this debate, and its result,	484
79.	Extension of the railway system in France,	485
80.	Close of the session, and new elections,	486
81.	Death of the Duke of Orléans,	487
82.	Vast importance of this event,	488
83.	Division of parties on the regency question,	489
84-87.	Argument of Guizot and Thiers for the bill,	489-491
88-90.	Argument of M. Lamartine for the regency of the Duchess of Orléans,	492-493
91.	Result of the debate, and reflections on it,	494
92.	M. Guizot as a statesman,	495
93.	His character as an orator,	496
94.	M. Thiers as a statesman,	497
95.	M. Thiers as a speaker,	498
96.	His fate as a Minister,	499
97.	Lamartine as a statesman,	500
98.	His excessive vanity, which ruined everything,	*ib.*
99.	M. Odillon Barrot,	501
100.	M. Marrast,	502
101.	M. Louis Blanc,	503
102.	M. Berryer,	504
103.	M. Duchâtel, Marshal Soult, and Count Molé,	505
104.	Corruption of the Ministerial majority in the Chamber,	506
105.	Its great extent,	507
106.	Demoralisation of the National Guard,	508
107.	Resumé of the state of France at this period,	509

CHAPTER XLV.

WARS OF THE FRENCH IN ALGERIA, FROM THE REVOLT UNDER ABD-EL-KADER IN 1840 TO THE FALL OF LOUIS PHILIPPE IN 1848.

§		Page
1.	Description of Algeria, and its three separate regions,	511
2.	Description of the Sahara,	512
3.	Influence thence arising to the rulers of the Tel,	513
4.	Extreme varieties of the climate,	514
5.	The Kabyles,	*ib.*
6.	Statistics of the colony,	515
7.	Difficulties of the colony in respect of industry,	516
8.	Exports and imports,	517
9.	Great importance of Algiers as a school for war,	518
10.	Qualities called out in the officers and soldiers,	*ib.*
11-12.	Character of Changarnier,	520
13-14.	Cavaignac,	521-522
15.	Canrobert,	523
16.	Marshal Bugeaud,	524
17.	General de Lamoricière,	525
18.	General Bosquet,	526
19.	Marshal St Arnaud,	527
20.	Marshal Pelissier,	528
21.	The Zouaves,	529
22.	State of Algiers in 1840,	530
23.	First operations of the campaign, and capture of Medeah,	531
24.	Expedition against Milianah,	533
25.	Bloody combat on the Col de Mouzaia,	534
26.	Campaign of 1841,	535
27.	Successful campaign of 1841,	*ib.*
28.	Submission of various tribes in the south and west,	537
29.	Final defeat and flight of Abd-el-Kader,	538
30.	His reappearance,	539
31.	Capture of the harem of Abd-el-Kader,	540
32.	Commencement of difficulties with Marocco,	541
33.	Which lead to a rupture,	*ib.*
34.	Attack on the French by the troops of Marocco. Combat on the Mouillah,	542
35.	Conference between General Bedeau and the Marocco chief,	543
36.	The conference ends in hostilities,	544
37.	Commencement of hostilities with Marocco by sea and land,	545
38.	Bombardment of Tangiers and Mogador,	546
39.	Critical position of the French, and their resolution to fight,	547
40.	Dispositions for the battle,	548
41.	Battle of Isly,	549
42.	Glorious victory of the French,	550
43.	Peace with Marocco,	551
44.	Campaign against the Kabyles, and fresh efforts of Abd-el-Kader,	552
45.	Capitulation of Abd-el-Kader, and its violation by the French,	553
46.	General submission and pacification of Algeria,	554
47.	General view of Algeria, as finally acquired by the French,	555
48.	Diminutive scale still of its industrial resources,	*ib.*
49.	Parallel of the British empire in India and the French in Algeria,	557

CHAPTER XLVI.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF FRANCE AND EUROPE, FROM THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF ORLEANS IN 1843 TO THE REVOLUTION OF 1848.

§		Page
1.	Change in the external policy of France in the last years of Louis Philippe's reign,	559
2.	French excitement on the affair of Otaheite,	560
3.	Pacific views of Louis Philippe and M. Guizot,	561
4.	Violence of the public journals,	563
5.	Affair of the University, and retirement of M. Villemain,	564
6-7.	Argument of M. Thiers against the Jesuits,	565-566
8.	Answer of M. Guizot and M. Le Martin du Nord,	*ib.*
9.	Decision of the Chamber on the subject,	567
10.	Negotiations with the Court of Rome on the subject, and ordonnance against the Jesuits,	568
11.	Effect of these measures,	569
12.	Treaty regarding the right of search for slaves,	570
13.	State of Poland since the termination of the war,	571
14.	Beneficial changes in Prussian Poland,	572
15.	State of things in Gallicia,	573
16.	Disputes about the Corvées,	574
17.	Spread of Socialism in Gallicia,	575
18.	Injurious influence of the Jews,	576
19.	And disbanded soldiers,	577
20.	Commencement of the insurrection of the nobles,	578
21.	Commencement of the insurrection,	579
22.	Horrors of the insurrection,	580
23.	Disturbances at Cracow, and its abandonment by the Austrians,	581
24.	Recapture of Cracow,	583
25.	Reflections on the annexation of Cracow,	584
26.	Great sensation produced by these events in Europe,	*ib.*
27.	Justification of the annexation which this conduct of the Cracow insurgents afforded,	585
28.	Embarrassment of M. Guizot and Lord Palmerston on the Polish question,	586
29.	Renewed attempt to assassinate Louis Philippe,	587
30.	Escape of Louis Napoleon from the Château of Ham,	588
31.	Mode in which he effected his escape,	590
32.	Slight attention which this event excited. Marriage of the Duke de Bordeaux,	591
33.	Last election under Louis Philippe,	592
34.	The Spanish Marriages. History of the question,	594
35.	Danger to England from the French and Spanish alliance,	595
36.	Repeal of the Salic law, and opening of the Spanish throne to queens,	*ib.*
37.	Effects of this change on the interests of England,	597
38.	Queen Christina's proposal of a double marriage to Louis Philippe,	598
39.	Which are declined by Louis Philippe,	598
40.	Further conferences on the subject,	*ib.*
41.	Conferences at the Château d'Eu, and at Windsor, on the subject,	600
42.	The Queen-Regent offers the hand of her daughter the Queen to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg,	602
43.	Intrigue for the simultaneous marriage of the Queen and Infanta, which is disapproved by Louis Philippe,	603

§		Page
44.	Lord Palmerston's letter of 19th July to Sir H. Bulwer,	605
45.	Terror of M. Guizot and Louis Philippe of the Coburg proposal,	607
46.	The two marriages are contracted on the same day,	608
47.	Coldness in consequence of the British and French Governments,	609
48.	Disastrous effects of this coldness,	610
49.	Its effects on the future of France and England,	611
50.	Who was to blame in these marriages,	612
51.	Lord Palmerston's was an imprudent slip; Guizot's a breach of faith,	613
52.	Effects of this disunion of France and England on Poland,	614
53.	Diplomatic differences of France and England on the Treaty of Utrecht,	615
54.	Cordiality of France and England before the affair of the Spanish marriages,	617
55.	Affairs of Greece, and disaccord of France and England regarding it,	618
56.	Which is at first supported, and then disowned, by Russia,	619
57.	Commencement of a coldness, which approaches to a rupture,	620
58.	Increased division between France and England regarding Greece,	621
59.	Differences regarding Portugal and La Plata,	622
60.	Affairs at Madrid, and alienation of the King and Queen,	623
61.	Affairs of Italy. Death of the Pope, and accession of Pius IX.,	624
62.	Election and character of Pius IX.,	625
63.	State of Italian opinion at this time,	626
64.	Character of Pius IX.,	627
65.	General amnesty, and transports with which it was received,	628
66.	First acts of the Pope,	629
67.	Difficulties which beset the Papal Government,	*ib.*
68.	Which are increased by the general concourse of Liberals to Rome,	630
69.	Adoption of the same policy in the Grand-duchy of Tuscany,	631
70.	Movements in Sardinia and Piedmont,	632
71.	Papal declaration against Liberalism,	633
72.	Revolutionary movement in Rome,	*ib.*
73.	Measures of the Austrian and French cabinets,	634
74.	Conduct of the French Government,	635
75.	Effects in Piedmont,	636
76.	Prince Metternich's views at this crisis,	*ib.*
77.	M. Guizot's policy as to Italy at this period,	637
78.	Policy of the English Government at the same time,	639
79.	Great reforms introduced into Piedmont,	641
80.	Revolution at Lucca, and its annexation to Tuscany,	642
81.	Enthusiasm excited at Rome by Lord Minto's arrival,	643
82.	M. Rossi's warning remarks to the Pope and the Radicals,	644
83.	Riot in Rome,	645
84.	Revolt in Sicily,	646
85.	Publication of a constitution at Naples,	647
86.	Great sensation produced by this change in Italy,	648
87.	Convulsions in Sicily,	649
88.	Credulity of Lord Palmerston to the Liberal Italian agents,	650
89.	Affairs of Switzerland, and progress of democracy in it,	651
90.	Progress of democratic influences in it,	653
91.	Rapid growth of Radicalism in the Swiss cities,	654
92.	Origin of the religious disputes,	655
93.	Invasion of the Free Bands under Ochsenbein,	656
94.	Which leads to the Sunderbund,	657

§ Page
95. Proceedings of the great Council against the Sunderbund, . . 658
96. Preparations for civil war, ... 659
97. Policy of France and Austria at this crisis, ... *ib.*
98. Policy of Lord Palmerston to support the Radicals, . . . 660
99. Divergence of Lord Palmerston's policy on the question, . . 662
100. Disastrous effect of this divergence, ... 663
101. Lord Palmerston delays to join in the French and Austrian intervention, 664
102. Forces on both sides, ... 666
103. Easy success of the Radicals, ... *ib.*
104. The tardy mediation of the five powers is declined, . . . 668
105. Alarm which these measures of England awakened on the Continent, *ib.*
106. Formation of a league against Great Britain, ... 669
107. Weakness of Great Britain at sea and land at this period, . . 670
108. Reflections on the extraordinary disproportion of the danger and means of resistance, ... 671
109. Cause of the opposite foreign policy of France and England at this period, *ib.*
110. The completeness of revolution in one country, and its incompleteness in the other, occasioned the difference, ... 672

CHAPTER XLVII.

FRANCE FROM THE MIDDLE OF 1847 TO THE FALL OF LOUIS PHILIPPE IN FEBRUARY 1848.

1. Alarming internal state of France in the end of 1847, . . . 673
2-3. Prince de Joinville's letter to the Duke de Nemours, . . 674-675
4. Views of the King on the subject, ... 676
5. Deficiency of the crops in 1845 and 1846, ... 677
6. Failure of the potato crop in 1846, and monetary crisis, . . 678
7. Financial state of 1847, and great loans contracted for by the Government, 679
8. Enlarged issue of bank-notes, ... 680
9. General corruption in the Government departments, . . . 682
10. Events which brought it to light, ... 683
11. Revelation of further scandal, ... 684
12. Result of the trial, and conviction of the accused, . . . 685
13. Murder of the Duchess of Praslin, ... 686
14. Details of the catastrophe, and its termination, ... 687
15. Use made of these abuses by the Revolutionists, . . . 689
16. Cry for Parliamentary Reform, ... 690
17. Discontent of the National Guard, ... 691
18. Coalition of parties against the Government, and measures agreed on, . 692
19. Commencement of the banquet agitation, ... 694
20. Duvergier d'Hauranne's speech, ... 695
21. M. de Lamartine's speech at Maçon, ... 696
22. Efforts of the Liberals to keep back the Socialists, . . . 697
23. M. de Lamartine's ulterior views, ... 698
24. Decline of the banquet agitation in the end of the year, . . 699
25. Meeting of the Chambers, and King's Speech, ... 700
26. Discussion on the Address, ... 701
27. Affair of M. Petit, ... *ib.*

§		Page
28.	Speech of M. Thiers,	702
29-30.	Speech of M. de Tocqueville,	703-704
31.	Speech of M. Billault,	704
32.	Speech of M. de Lamartine,	705
33-38.	M. Duchâtel's answer,	706-710
39.	Last budget of Louis Philippe,	711
40.	Divisions on the Address,	*ib.*
41.	The Opposition resolve on a banquet,	712
42.	Great agitation in Paris on the announcement,	714
43.	Death of the Princess Adelaide,	*ib.*
44.	Preparations for the banquet,	715
45.	Programme of the proposed procession,	716
46.	Difficulties on both sides regarding a procession,	*ib.*
47.	Debate, and decision of the Liberal chiefs against the procession,	718
48.	Articles in the *National* and *Réforme* on the subject,	719
49.	Strength of the Republicans at this period,	720
50.	Forces of the Government, and its measures,	721
51.	Aspect of the people,	722
52.	Insidious policy of the National Guard,	723
53.	The National Guard in effect join the insurgents,	724
54.	Consternation in the Tuileries,	726
55.	Resignation of M. Guizot,	*ib.*
56.	Announcement of this to the Chambers, and its reception in Paris,	728
57.	Catastrophe in front of M. Guizot's house,	729
58.	Parade of the dead bodies through Paris,	730
59.	M. Thiers is sent for,	731
60.	Excessive agitation in Paris during the night,	732
61.	Marshal Bugeaud's success,	733
62.	M. Thiers and Odillion Barrot succumb, and withdraw the troops,	734
63.	Ruinous consequences of this concession,	735
64.	Abandonment of the Palais Royal,	736
65.	Last hours of the monarchy,	737
66.	The King is forced to abdicate,	738
67.	Proceedings of the generals at this time, and flight of the King,	740
68.	Escape of the Royal Family,	741
69.	Heroic conduct of the Duchess of Orléans,	742
70.	Opinion in the Chamber of Deputies,	743
71.	Treachery of M. de Lamartine,	744
72.	Entrance of the Duchess of Orléans into the Chambers,	*ib.*
73.	She is refused a hearing, and obliged by the mob to retire,	746
74.	Nomination of the Provisional Government,	747
75.	Nomination of another Provisional Government, and proclamation of a Republic,	748
76.	M. Lamartine's portrait of the Revolutionists,	749
77.	Escape of the Duchess of Orléans and the Royal Family,	750
78.	Causes which brought about the Revolution,	752
79.	Which was ultimately owing to its revolutionary origin,	*ib.*

HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER XLI.

ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF SIR R. PEEL TO POWER IN NOVEMBER 1841, TO THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN JUNE 1844.

1. Character of Sir R. Peel, so variously represented.

Sir Robert Peel, who was now, by a concurrence of parties, and the experienced weakness of former governments, again elevated by a decisive majority to power, was one of those men who have been so variously painted by their contemporaries, and so differently mirrored by their actions, that their real character will for ever remain a perplexing enigma to future ages. All public men, whose deeds have left a permanent impress on the surface of public affairs, are of course represented in opposite colours by party writers of opposite principles; and it is generally from a comparison of both, as from the conflicting evidence in a criminal trial, that the verdict of posterity is formed. But in Sir R. Peel's case this ordinary difficulty is enhanced by the singular circumstance that he has been variously represented, not only by writers of different parties, but by writers of the same party at different times. In the early period of his career he was the chosen champion of the Church and High Tory principles, and in a similar degree the object of obloquy to the Whigs: in his late years he

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

was a still greater object of laudation to the Liberals and vituperation to the Conservatives. It is difficult to say whether, prior to 1829, the "bigot Peel" was more vehemently denounced by the Irish Catholics and English Liberals, than the "apostate Peel" was, after 1846, by his early friends and supporters; while the blame of this latter party has been since that time almost drowned in the loud and impassioned applause of the ruling Liberal majority in the State.

2. Causes of this diversity.

No one need be told to what this singular and almost unprecedented change of opinion, in both the parties which divide the country, has been owing. Sir R. Peel, at different times of his life, was not only actuated by opposite principles, but he was a different man. The steady, uncompromising opponent of Catholic claims became their most decided and successful supporter; the resolute enemy of free trade in corn turned into its unqualified advocate; and on both occasions he exerted the powers with which he had been intrusted by those hostile to the alteration to insure its unqualified adoption. Changes so prodigious occurring in one so highly gifted, and wielding, in a manner, the whole political power in the State, excited more than the ordinary amount of political enmity and antagonism; they engendered a feeling of disappointed expectation, and awakened the pangs of betrayed affection. Confidence not only in him, but in all public men of the age, was shaken by so flagrant a deviation from declared principles; and all parties—even those most benefited by the sudden and unexpected conversion—concurred in the melancholy conclusion, that the time was past when consistency of political conduct was to be expected in public men; that frequency of change had produced its usual effect in destroying fixity of purpose; and that we had fallen into such days as those when a Marlborough was elevated to the height of greatness by betraying one sovereign, and Ney suffered the death of a traitor for attempting to betray another.

3. Injustice of these extreme opinions on both sides

It is not surprising, when the circumstances of those two memorable conversions are considered, that feelings of this warm and impassioned kind should have arisen in the party which, twice over, saw their most cherished system of policy overturned by their chosen champion; but a calm consideration of the case must, in justice to Sir R. Peel, very materially modify these opinions. The analogy seems at first sight just between a political chief altering his policy in government, and a general betraying his sovereign in the field of battle; but in reality it is not so. There is no parallelism between the situation of a soldier and a statesman. Fidelity to king and country will admit of no equivocation; but adherence, under changing circumstances, to preconceived opinions, so far from being always a political virtue, may often be the greatest political fault, for it may lead to public ruin. Prince Polignac was quite consistent through life, and, as such, he must command the respect of every honourable mind; but what did his consistency lead to? A great general is not he who always takes the same position, but he who, in all circumstances, takes the position most likely to be attended at the time with success. In this world of change, and in an age pre-eminently distinguished by it, undeviating adherence to expressed thought is *impossible* in a statesman; for his power being built on opinion, he must go with that opinion, or it will be immediately shattered. Consistency of opinion may be expected in an author who treats of past events, or a philosopher who discourses on their tendencies, for they address themselves to future ages, when the immutable laws of nature will be seen to have been unceasingly acting in the mighty maze; but a statesman, who must act on the present, can only wield power by means of the multitude, and to do so with effect he must often share their versatility. Mr Pitt and Mr Burke themselves changed: the former was at first a parliamentary reformer; the latter, in early life, a strenuous supporter

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

of revolution in America. The real reproach against Sir R. Peel is, not that he changed his views, but that he made use of power conferred by one party to carry through the objects of their opponents; a course which, however it may be attended with success, it will be no easy matter for his warmest panegyrists to defend.

4. He did not want political courage.

It is commonly said, in explanation of this tendency to change, which formed so remarkable a feature in his character, that Sir R. Peel, though personally brave, was politically timid; that he entertained a nervous dread of revolution, and that the moment he saw a course of policy was likely to be attended with danger, he relinquished it, and passed over with all his forces to the victorious side. There can be no doubt that at first sight this seems a very plausible theory to explain the phenomenon. But a closer examination of his political career will show that it too is erroneous, and that a want of moral courage can by no means be justly imputed as a failing to Sir R. Peel. On the contrary, he frequently exhibited firmness and resolution in the very highest degree, both in external and internal affairs. Witness his noble conduct on learning the Affghanistan disaster in 1841, which, after a calamity unparalleled since the destruction of the legions of Varus, again chained victory to the British standards in India; and his intrepid self-sacrifice to what he deemed the good of his country in the emancipation of the Catholics in 1829. Even his crowning act of self-immolation, when he repealed the Corn Laws, in opposition to the tenor of an entire lifetime, in 1846, was anything but an indication of political weakness. To a man of his sensitive temperament, and so passionately desirous of preserving the lead of the noble party he had so long headed in the House of Commons, the averted eye, the unreturned pressure of the hand, were more terrible than the most signal political defeat; and the ambition of a lifetime was more thoroughly sacrificed by a change which necessarily

alienated the warmest friends, than if he had been consigned, like Strafford, to the dungeon and the scaffold. But he felt, doubtless, a yet nobler ambition than that of leading a party or ruling an empire. His feeling was—

> "Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
> *The threats of pain and ruin to despise,*
> To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
> And read his hist'ry in a nation's eyes."

5. He had no original genius, and was not a leader of thought.

Sir Robert Peel was not a man of original genius or inventive thought: there is not a singular *idée mère* can be traced to him through his whole career. "Register, register, register," was not his own, he borrowed it from a celebrated political journal, generally in opposition to himself, where it is to be found years before he ever gave utterance to the counsel.* His mind was adoptive, not creative: he was the mirror of the age, not its director: his leading ideas and principles were taken from others. In monetary affairs he only elaborated the ideas of Mr Horner and Mr Ricardo, first enunciated in the Bullion Report. In supporting the Corn Laws he adopted the arguments of Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh; in assailing them, those of Mr Bright and Mr Cobden. It was the same with Catholic Emancipation: his arguments, admirable on both sides, were alternately adopted from those of Lord Liverpool and Mr Perceval, of Mr Canning and Mr Plunkett. It was this which suggested to Mr

* "A considerable proportion of the present voters are, from their occupations and habits, democratical, and will ever continue so. They must be *outvoted*, or the constitution is lost. The mode in which this must be done is obvious; and it is here that the persevering efforts of property can best overcome the prodigious ascendancy which the Reform Bill, in the outset, gave to the reckless and destitute classes of the community. IT IS IN THE REGISTRATION COURTS THAT THE BATTLE OF THE CONSTITUTION IS TO BE FOUGHT AND WON. It is by a continued, persevering, and skilful exertion there that education, worth, and property may regain their ascendancy over anarchy, vice, and democracy. By a proper organisation in this way, it is astonishing what may be done. It is thus, and thus only, that the balance of society can be restored in these islands."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, 1st May 1835, vol. xxxvii. p. 813. The capitals are in the original. Sir R. Peel's speeches to the same effect were in 1837 and 1838.

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

Disraeli the felicitous expression, that his mind was a "huge appropriation clause"—a phrase which so perfectly expressed the truth that it became a household word in every part of Great Britain. But this very absence of a creative mind, or original thought, only rendered him more powerful and successful as a statesman, whose influence and success in a constitutional monarchy must always be built upon his measures falling in with the opinions of the majority. These opinions are generally formed upon the great of a former generation, not the present; and therefore nothing is, in a popular community, so fatal to the present power of a statesman, whatever it may be to his future fame, as conceiving or acting upon original ideas. But though not gifted with a creative mind, he was second to none in the readiness with which he embraced, the force with which he worked out, and the ability with which he enforced, the arguments of others. His industry was indefatigable, his powers of research vast, and his faculty of bringing an immense mass of facts to bear upon a particular view, unrivalled even in the days of Huskisson. He had a prodigious acquaintance with all the principal branches of our trade and manufactures, and was often able to correct the statements or inform the ignorance of the very persons practically engaged in them. Like all men of a capacious and powerful mind, he was gifted with a singularly retentive memory, and could bring out at will figures and details on subjects which for long had not been under discussion, to the no small annoyance of his opponents, who were rarely endowed with the same power of commanding details, and bringing them forth on the proper occasion. Hansard's Debates were familiar to him, and great was the success with which he often turned against his opponents that provoking record of the past. These, if not the highest qualities in a debater, were perhaps the most serviceable in the reformed House of Commons, composed for the most part of practical men who had worked their way to the lead

in the large constituencies, and who were less liable to be influenced by bursts of eloquence or the flowers of rhetoric than by a simple business-like statement of facts connected with, or material to, the leading interests which their constituencies expected them to support.

6. His style of oratory.

His style of eloquence was of a high, but not of the highest kind. His speeches were always full of matter, his command of figures immense, and the correctness of his statements of facts such that his most inveterate opponent was never able to detect him in an error. He was more successful, however, in stating his own case than in refuting that of his opponents: he seldom met an argument fairly: he rarely tried to refute, often to ridicule his opponent. It was well said of him by an accomplished parliamentary antagonist, that he drove an excellent pair, but rarely put on four horses. He was an accomplished scholar, and was first brought into notice by taking the highest degrees at Oxford both in classics and mathematics. But though he retained through life a strong partiality for the studies of his youth, and often made a happy use of classical allusions and quotations in Parliament, his mind was not sufficiently ardent, his genius not sufficiently glowing, to inspire him with the vehement feelings which are the soul of the highest style of eloquence. "Thoughts that breathe and words that burn" seldom occurred to his calm and practical mind. He was an admirable debater; and, from his thorough command of every subject to which he applied his powers, he never failed to rouse the attention of his hearers, and acquired at length the command, to an extraordinary extent, of the House of Commons. But though always sagacious and weighty in the arguments he adduced, he had none of the earnestness which springs from strong internal conviction, and still less of that, the highest of all, which flows from originality or fire of conception.

His name is so indissolubly connected with the two great changes which he was mainly instrumental in effecting, that his merits in an inferior department of the public

CHAP. XLI.

1841.

7. His administrative powers.

service are in a great measure forgotten. But in the domestic administration of the empire his merits were of the very highest kind. As Home Secretary, during the many years he held that important office, his conduct was in the truest sense upright and meritorious. Patient and laborious, conscientious in the conception of duty, and unwearied in its discharge, he was always at his post, and devoted the powers of an active and vigorous mind to the investigation of the numerous matters of public and private interest which were then submitted to his consideration. He took upon himself the duty of both counsel and judge in the melancholy cases then unhappily so frequent, when the life of a criminal was referred to the mercy of the Crown and the decision of the Home Secretary. The improvements he introduced into the Irish police were so great that he may be said to have been its founder; and it was under his direction that it became what it now is, one of the finest bodies of men, and beyond all question the finest civil force that exists in the world. The metropolis owes to him the admirable mounted and foot police to which its tranquillity and safety in recent times have been so much indebted. Nor were his exertions confined merely to administrative ameliorations. In the modification of our criminal code he eagerly adopted, and judiciously carried into practice, the views of Romilly and Mackintosh; and it is owing to his efforts, in a great degree, that the severity of the penal law has been so much modified that, for above ten years, no man has been executed in Great Britain save for wilful and cold-blooded murder. Happy would it have been if his sagacious and practical mind had been turned with equal earnestness to the great questions of secondary punishments, and the removal of the difficulties with which the practical operation of the only effectual one—transportation—has come to be surrounded!

One great and lasting benefit has been conferred by Sir Robert Peel on his country, which even the strongest of his opponents will, at this distance of time, be willing to

admit. This was the glorious stand he made against the flood of revolution when the Reform Bill was under discussion, and during the years which immediately followed its adoption. That the Whig leaders were then as much alarmed as the Conservatives at the strength of the passion which they had evoked in the country, is evident from Lord Brougham's words, that, in dissolving Parliament in April 1831, they felt as if they were spanning a fiery gulf on a rib of steel, and the undoubted fact that Earl Grey was precipitated from power in 1834, because, after the bill was passed, he set himself to oppose the ulterior designs of his extreme supporters. But had it not been for the steadiness, courage, and ability with which, during those critical years, Sir Robert Peel conducted the Opposition, it is more than probable that all Earl Grey's efforts to moderate the storm would have been unavailing, and that 1832 would have been to England what 1789 had been to France. It was owing to the extreme wisdom and ability of his conduct on that occasion that the most precious of all objects in withstanding a movement,—time,—was gained, and that, before irrevocable changes had been made, the nation had in some degree recovered from its delusions, and the passion for organic change had been sobered down into the safer desire for practical ameliorations. And though he failed in retaining power when it was conferred upon him in 1835, yet his administration, short as it was, was attended with the most important effects; for it increased the Opposition in the House of Commons from 100 to 300, again raised the House of Lords from the dust to its legitimate functions, and, after a rude shock, restored the constitution in some degree to its former equilibrium.

8. Great merit of his opposition to Reform.

The anomalies in Sir Robert Peel's political career have been so extraordinary, that many have sought an explanation of them in the supposition that he was throughout life actuated by an excessive ambition, nourished early in life by his father, who laid out for him

9. Ambition was not the cause of his versatility of principle.

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

from the first the situation of prime-minister, and increased subsequently by his extraordinary and long-continued sway in the House of Commons. This it was, it is said, which led to his change of principle: he could not endure the monotony of a private station, and when no other means of grasping or retaining power remained, he sought to effect it by a sacrifice of consistency. An attentive consideration of his career, however, must convince every impartial person that this is by no means the true solution of the difficulty. On the contrary, had he been actuated by personal feelings or political ambition, his conduct on the most important occasions of his life would have been the reverse of what it actually was. Had he chosen to bid for popularity, instead of sacrificing it by opposing Reform, he would have been carried forward to power on the shoulders of the people, and attained a position, in 1833, as commanding as the great commoner who, in the middle of the preceding century, supplanted the effete Whig aristocracy. His matchless skill in discerning the signs of the times, and observing the tendencies of the House of Commons, told him, from the first, that he was not paving, but barring the road to power, by his unexpected conversions in 1829 and 1846. He said, with truth, in his posthumous memoirs, that if he had been actuated by the love of power, not the love of his country, he would have either retained the permanent lead of one party, by steadily adhering to its principles, or acquired the direction of the other, by frankly adopting its views, and not sacrificed both by a conduct which secured to him the confidence of neither.

10. Real explanation of his conduct.

The truth appears to be, that he was throughout, and in all his changes, actuated by a sincere and disinterested desire for the good of his country; but that one unhappy mistake, into which he had been led, in the outset of his career, by his adoption of the views of others, rendered him, on the most momentous occasions, either blind to what that good really was, or timorous in asserting his

own views regarding it. Without the advantages of ancient descent or aristocratic connections, and the son of one who had been the architect of his own fortune, he was naturally inclined to regard with favour that mercantile interest to which his greatness had been owing. It would be going too far to assert, as Gibbon did of Mr Fox, that "his inmost soul was tinged with democracy;" for no man was inspired from principle with a more profound respect for the civil institutions of his country. But this was the conviction of reason, it was not the bent of inclination. It is certain that, from early youth, he was inclined to Liberal opinions, and that it was a knowledge of that which induced his father, who was a stanch Tory of the old school, to throw him so early into public life, in hopes that, when in harness, he would wax warm in the contest on his own side.* This tendency, unavoidable in one situated as he was, was unfortunately greatly increased by his early connection with the rising school of the political economists, whose opinions on the all-important matter of monetary policy had been recorded in the memorable Bullion Report of 1810. The leaders of this school, Mr Horner and Mr Ricardo, obtained on these subjects the entire direction of his mind; and it is to their influence that the parts of his career which otherwise would seem inexplicable are chiefly to be ascribed. For good or for evil, they stamped their impress upon his mind; and his subsequent career bore indelible marks of their influence.

* "Une anecdote que je tiens de bonne source donnerait lieu de penser qu'il était, depuis longtemps et par nature, placé sur la pente à laquelle il céda, quand de conservateur obstiné il devint ardent reformateur. On dit qu'en 1809, lorsqu'il entra dans la Chambre des Communes, son père, le vieux Sir R. Peel, alla trouver Lord Liverpool, et lui dit; 'Mon fils est, soyez-en sûr, un jeune homme doué de talens rares, et qui jouera un rôle important. Mais je le connais bien; *au fond, ses penchants sont Whigs;* si nous ne l'engageons pas promptement dans nos rangs, il nous échappera. Mettez-le dans les affaires; il vous servira bien; mais il faut sans tarder vous emparer de lui.' Lord Liverpool observa le fils, reconnut son mérite, et suivit le conseil du père."—GUIZOT, *Sir R. Peel*, p. 342.

CHAP. XLI.

1841.

11. His views on the Currency.

He had been nominated chairman of the Bullion Committee of 1819 by Lord Liverpool, to form a check upon the extreme views of Mr Ricardo and the Economists; but he soon was either convinced by their arguments, or fell a prey to their seductions. He disdained lucre for himself or his relations, but he worshipped it with devout devotion for his country. He thought the country never could be in danger when its monetary state was sound, and that that depended entirely on the retention of gold by the Bank of England. He measured the public strength by the number of sovereigns in its vaults, private influence in a great degree by the magnitude of balances with bankers. In gold he saw the only solid and imperishable condensation of wealth, in realised capital the only secure foundation for future progress or accumulation. He never could believe that the nation was other than prosperous if the Bank had fifteen millions' worth of gold in its coffers. He deemed every attempt to create or augment wealth hazardous and delusive which was not based upon the interest of its monied capital, every measure expedient which went to augment the solid metallic treasures of the nation. To that unhappy conviction the most fatal errors of his career may be distinctly traced. He lived in the perpetual dread of the nation being broken down, and public ruin induced, either by the draining away the gold, which would starve industry, or by the issue of assignats to supply their place, which would extinguish capital. The memory of 1825, when the bullion in the Bank was reduced to a million, and public bankruptcy was avoided only by the issue of two millions of old notes; of the dreary years from 1838 to 1842, when suffering met him on every side, and the memory of which, he himself said, "would never be erased from his mind," were perpetually present to his recollection. The cry, "To stop the Duke, go for gold," continually resounded in his ears.

When once this key to his political conduct is seized,

it affords a satisfactory explanation of his whole political career. He was truly and sincerely patriotic, and actuated on every occasion by nothing but a regard for what he deemed the public good; but he, nevertheless, acted on many in direct opposition to it, from the unhappy delusion under which he laboured in regard to guarding the treasures of the Bank of England. He was courageous, both personally and politically, for himself, but timorous for his country. It is no wonder he was so; for he had placed it on the unstable equilibrium, and any considerable concussion might overturn at once the whole fabric. His practical sagacity led him clearly to see that any serious internal convulsion, and even the most inconsiderable foreign war, would lead to such a run on the Bank as would, in all probability, prove fatal to that establishment, and with it entirely unhinge public credit, and render destitute millions of starving workmen. It was to avert this catastrophe that all his measures were directed. For this it was that he emancipated the Catholics in 1829, to postpone rebellion in Ireland, and surrendered Maine, by the Ashburton capitulation, in 1842, to avoid a rupture with America, and abandoned the Corn Laws, in 1846, to render England the great emporium of corn throughout the world, and thereby prevent the drain which so nearly proved fatal to the Bank in 1839. His monetary bill of 1844 was intended to lay speculation in irons, and so prevent the drain upon the metallic treasures of the nation, which indulgence in it to excess never failed to occasion. That his apprehensions were well founded, the event has decisively proved; the only thing to be wondered at is, that he did not perceive that the danger was entirely of his own creation, by having rendered public credit dependent on the retention of gold, and that the measures he intended to avert were the greatest possible aggravation of the evil.

12. Explanation thus afforded of his political career.

CHAP. XLI.

1841.

13. His character in private life.

In private life, Sir Robert's character was altogether unexceptionable. Inheriting from his father, the first baronet, who made the fortune, immense wealth, he made a noble use of it. Simple and unostentatious in his habits, his tastes were refined, and he expended largely in the encouragement of the arts which elevate the mind and purify the taste. A kind and affectionate husband, a liberal father, he never deviated from correctness either in conduct or decorum, and his bitterest political enemies (and no man latterly had more) were unable to find one blot in his escutcheon, so far as domestic relations were concerned. He was by nature afflicted with a most violent temper, and his fits of anger, when a young man, were so violent that he used, when they came on, to shut himself up alone till the dark fit was over. By degrees, however, he obtained the mastery of this infirmity, and this at length so effectually that he passed with the world, at a distance, as a man of a singularly cold and phlegmatic temperament. He had all the contempt for rank, merely as such, which so often accompanies strong intellectual powers; and he showed this, not only through his entire life, but in his injunctions to his family after his death. He declined a seat in the House of Peers in 1835, when offered by William IV.; he respectfully refused the Garter when tendered to him, in 1846, by Queen Victoria; and in his testament he solemnly enjoined his family never to accept honours for his services to his country, whatever they might do for their own. Faithful to his injunctions, Lady Peel, after his death, declined a peerage in her own right, pressed upon her by the Queen. Reserved in his nature, and uncommunicative in his habits, he did not seek to shine in general society, and perhaps was not so well qualified as many inferior men for such displays; but in a select circle of a few, with whom he was intimate, the conversation of no one was more charming.[1] There was a certain *retenue*,

[1] Guizot, Sir R. Peel, 350, 351.

however, maintained with those for whom he had the greatest regard; he did not, like Mr Canning, unbosom himself in the most unguarded moments; like Mr Pitt, he had many followers, but few friends. *

14. Formation of the new Ministry.

The resignation of Ministers had been so long foreseen that Sir R. Peel's arrangements were complete before it took place, and the new Cabinet was announced in a few days. It presented a formidable array of talent, as, in addition to nearly all the members of the Duke of Wellington's Ministry, Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham, who had receded from the ranks of the Whigs, were included in it. Sir R. Peel, of course, was First Lord of the Treasury; the Duke of Wellington had, at his desire, a seat in the Cabinet without any office, save that of Commander-in-Chief, attached to it. Lord Lyndhurst resumed his seat on the Woolsack. Mr Goulburn was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir James Graham was Home Secretary; the Earl of Aberdeen, Foreign; and Lord Stanley, Colonial. Lord Haddington was First Lord of the Admiralty; and Lord Ellenborough, President of the

* The following charming picture of Sir R. Peel in his family circle at Drayton Manor, is from the hand of no common man, and no ordinary observer:—"Dans l'automne de 1848," says M. Guizot, "je vis Sir Robert Peel au sein de sa famille, et au milieu de la population de ses terres. Lady Peel, encore belle, passionnément et modestement dévouée à son mari; une fille charmante, mariée depuis à un fils de Lord Camoys; trois des fils de Sir Robert, l'un capitaine de vaisseau, déjà renommé par le plus brilliant courage; l'autre qui venait de débuter avec succès dans la Chambre des Communes; le troisième encore livré à ses études. Sur les domaines, de nombreux et heureux fermiers, parmi lesquels un des frères de Sir Robert, qui avait preféré la vie agricole à toute autre carrière; de grands travaux d'amélioration rurale, surtout de drainage, que Sir Robert suivait de près, et nous démontrait avec une connaissance précise des details. Belle existence domestique, grande, simple, bien ordonné avec largeur; dans l'intérieur de la maison une gravité affectueuse, moins animée, moins expansive, moins douce que ne le désirent et ne le comportent nos mœurs; les souvenirs politiques consacrés par une galerie des portraits, la plupart contemporains, soit les collègues de Sir Robert dans le Gouvernement, soit les hommes distingués avec lesquels il avait eu des relations. Hors de la maison, entre le propriétaire et la population environnante, une grande distance, marquée dans les manières, mais comblée par des rapports fréquents, pleins d'équité et de bienveillance de la part de supérieur, sans apparence d'envie ni de servilité chez les inférieurs."—GUIZOT, *Sir R. Peel*, p. 317-318.

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

Board of Control. The Cabinet exhibited, upon the whole, a splendid array of talent, and, what was of more importance to the country, an adequate intermixture of business habits and practical acquaintance with affairs; although many doubted whether each was in his proper place, and whether a transposition might not be made with benefit to the public service. In particular, Mr Goulburn seemed hardly adequate to the arduous duties of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Lord Stanley, notwithstanding his great abilities, was not peculiarly versed in colonial affairs; but so great was the ascendancy of Sir R. Peel over his colleagues, that it was trusted his master mind would pervade every department. No difficulty was now experienced with the Ladies of the Household. The Queen, yielding to her own matured sense, and the necessities of a constitutional monarchy, parted in silence and sorrow from her old and confidential friends; and the appointment of the Duchess of Buccleuch as Mistress of the Robes led to the pleasing hope that they might be succeeded by others not less trustworthy and acceptable to her Majesty. The new Ministers, especially the Duke of Wellington and Sir R. Peel, were loudly cheered when they drove up to the palace to kiss hands on their appointment to their respective offices.[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1841, 199, 200; Martineau, ii. 478, 479.

If the new Ministry were strong in their talents, their

* CABINET AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS.

Cabinet.

Duke of Wellington.	
First Lord of the Treasury,	Sir R. Peel.
Lord Chancellor,	Lord Lyndhurst.
Chancellor of the Exchequer,	Mr Goulburn.
President of the Council,	Lord Wharncliffe.
Privy Seal,	Duke of Buckingham.
Home Secretary,	Sir James Graham.
Foreign Secretary,	Earl of Aberdeen.
Colonial Secretary,	Lord Stanley.
First Lord of the Admiralty,	Lord Haddington.
President of the Board of Control,	Lord Ellenborough.
President of the Board of Trade,	Earl of Ripon.
Secretary at War,	Sir H. Hardinge.
Treasurer of the Navy,	Sir E. Knatchbull.

aristocratic connections, and the popular favour they enjoyed, they had need of all their advantages; for never did men adventure upon a more difficult undertaking, nor a more arduous task await any government. It was difficult to say whether without or within the prospects of the country were most gloomy—whether foreign or domestic affairs called most loudly for immediate attention. The aspect of the continent of Europe was threatening in the extreme. Russia, which by the treaty of 13th March 1841 had acquired the absolute command of

15. Immense difficulties of the country in foreign affairs.

Not in the Cabinet.

Postmaster-General,	Lord Lowther.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,	Lord G. Somerset.
Woods and Forests,	Earl of Lincoln.
Master-General of the Ordnance,	Sir G. Murray.
Master of the Mint,	W. E. Gladstone.
Secretary to the Admiralty,	Hon. Sidney Herbert.
Joint Secretaries of the Treasury,	Sir G. Clerk. Sir T. Freemantle.
Secretaries of the Board of Control,	Hon. W. Baring. J. E. Tennant.
Home Under-Secretary,	C. M. Sutton.
Foreign Under-Secretary,	Lord Canning.
Colonial Under-Secretary,	G. W. Hope.
Lords of the Treasury,	Alexander Pringle. H. Baring. J. Young. J. Milnes Gaskill.
Lords of the Admiralty,	Sir W. Gage. Sir G. Seymour. Hon. Captain Gordon. Hon. H. L. Corry.
Store-Keeper of the Ordnance,	J. R. Bonham.
Clerk of the Ordnance,	Captain Boldero.
Surveyor-General of the Ordnance,	Colonel Jonathan Peel.
Attorney-General,	Sir F. Pollock.
Solicitor-General,	Sir W. Follett.
Judge-Advocate,	Dr Nichol.
Governor-General of Canada,	Sir C. Bagot.
Lord Advocate for Scotland,	Sir W. Rae.
Solicitor-General,	D. M'Neill.
Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland,	Earl De Grey,
Lord-Chancellor,	Sir E. Sugden.
Chief-Secretary,	Lord Elliot.
Attorney-General,	Mr Blackburn.
Solicitor-General,	Mr Serjeant Jackson.

—*Ann. Reg.* 1841, pp. 199, 200.

CHAP. XLI.

1841.

Turkey by the ships of all other nations being excluded from the Black Sea, had come to the very verge of a war with Great Britain in consequence of the siege of Herat, and the struggle for the central mountains of Affghanistan. France, whose alliance with England had for the last ten years mainly contributed to the peace of Europe, had been alienated beyond redemption by the settlement of the Eastern Question without her intervention, and the defiance to her arms by the bombardment of Beyrout and Acre. Upon Spain, distracted by a savage and relentless civil war but recently extinguished, no reliance whatever could be placed; and the Liberal government of Portugal was only upheld by the constant presence of a British fleet in the Tagus. Austria, though united with England on the Eastern Question, and a party to the attack on Acre, was too nervous about the popular tendencies of the British Government, and the frightful civil war it had kept alive in the Peninsula, not to keep aloof on questions of general politics. The rebellion in Canada had been only recently suppressed, and a large force was still required to restrain its angry spirits; the West India colonies, steeped in ruin from the effects of negro emancipation, were only restrained by absolute impotence from breaking into open revolt; the Cape of Good Hope was threatened by the ceaseless hostility of the Caffres, and almost stripped of the doubtful support of the Boors; and India, involved in a perilous distant warfare in the mountains of Affghanistan, was on the verge of the greatest military disaster recorded in British annals. To complete the whole, England had got involved in a serious war with the Chinese Empire, carried on at an immense distance and at an enormous expense, in which ultimate success was doubtful, and present cost certain; and which, in the most favourable view, promised no successful results but at a vast expenditure of blood and treasure.

Fearfully as the horizon was overcast in every direction in external relations, the prospect was still more

Still darker prospect in internal affairs.

alarming in internal affairs; and in truth it was the national weakness at home which rendered so formidable the dangers which threatened the State abroad. Five bad seasons in succession had nearly doubled the price of food, and augmented immensely the annual importation from abroad. The price of wheat during the whole year had been above 62s., in September it was 72s. the quarter, and this high rate had been maintained for five years—a woeful change for the working classes from 39s. to 40s., at which it had stood before the commencement of this disastrous epoch. The pressure of high prices was not alleviated to the manufacturing classes by proportionally high wages; on the contrary, this period of distress had this peculiar and unprecedented feature, that high prices of provisions of all sorts were accompanied by ruinously low wages, especially in every branch of manufacturing industry. Power-loom weavers and coombers, who ten years before had been making 18s. a-week, could now only make 6s., and that by the most exhausting and incessant toil. Colliers and iron-miners, who four years before had earned 5s. a-day, were now at 2s. 6d., while wheat was nearly doubled in price; and weavers by the hand-loom could with difficulty make 3d. a-day. A hopeless paralysis seemed to have fallen upon the enterprise and activity of the country; the depression was universal and extreme, and continued without abatement during the whole of 1842 and the first half of 1843. The winters 1841-2 and 1842-3 were the most melancholy ever known in English history; and the only comforting feature in the case was the noble patience and resignation with which their sufferings were borne by the poor. Yet such was their intensity that the only surprising thing is how great proportion of them contrived to prolong existence at all during such a terrible and protracted period of suffering. The distress was so universal that it had ceased to be matter of dispute; the deplorable fact was felt and lamented in

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

silence. In proroguing Parliament, after a short session of a few weeks, subsequent to Sir R. Peel's accession to power, the Royal Commission said: "Her Majesty has commanded us to express her deep concern for the distress which has prevailed for a considerable period in some of the principal manufacturing districts, and to assure you that you may rely upon her cordial concurrence in all measures which, after mature consideration, may be taken to prevent the recurrence of that distress."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1841, 229; Mart. ii. 519, 520; Doubleday, ii. 329, 331; Personal knowledge.

17. Statistical details proving the distress.

This universal commercial and manufacturing suffering produced the results that might have been expected on the revenue, trade, and resources of the country. The national income sunk £1,200,000 from 1841 to 1842; while the current expenses were simultaneously increased by a similar amount, leaving a deficiency of £2,500,000, which had to be made up by loan.* The exports and imports of the nation exhibited a similar and still more alarming change:† the former had *sunk* from £53,000,000 in 1839 to £47,000,000 in 1842; the latter *increased* from £62,000,000 in 1839 to £70,000,000 in 1843;

* Income and Expenditure.

Years.	Income.	Expenditure besides Public Debt.	Interest of Debt.
1840	£47,567,565	£19,779,818	£29,381,718
1841	48,084,360	20,735,584	29,490,145
1842	46,965,631	21,517,549	29,428,120

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, 475, 3d edit.

† Exports and Imports of Great Britain and Ireland.

Years.	Exports—declared value.	Imports—official value.	Difference.
1839	£53,233,580	£62,004,000	£8,770,420
1840	51,406,430	67,432,964	16,026,534
1841	51,634,623	64,377,962	13,743,339
1842	47,381,623	65,204,729	17,813,706
1843	52,278,449	70,093,353	17,811,904

—Porter, 356, 3d edit.

the large balance, of course, having to be paid in gold or silver, to the entire destruction, under the existing monetary system, of all credit and commercial industry in the country. It was easy to see to what this large and increasing balance of imports over exports was owing. It arose from the great importation of grain during these years, in consequence of the continued unfavourable harvests and high prices, which had swelled from nothing at all in 1835 and 1836, to 3,000,000 quarters in 1842. This great import of grain cost the nation, almost all in gold and silver—wheat being on an average at 64s.—no less than £10,000,000 sterling in one year.* This state of things was sufficiently calamitous in itself; but when its effect upon the currency, and through it on the whole credit and industry of the country, is taken into view, the effect became beyond measure disastrous. The gold and silver held by the Bank of England, which in 1838 had been above £10,000,000, had sunk on 15th October 1839 to £2,545,000, and even in February 1842 had only risen to £5,600,000; as a necessary consequence of which, the notes of the Bank in circulation, which in 1818 had been £27,771,000, with a population little more than half, and transactions not a third of the present, and in 1835 and 1836 had been £19,147,000 and £18,154,000 respectively, had sunk at the first period to £16,732,000, and at the second to £17,500,000.[1] Whoever will consider these figures with attention, will at once perceive what was the cause of the universal distress, and how, under the existing monetary system, five bad seasons in

[1] Tooke on Prices, ii. 386, iii. 78, iv. 437, 439; Porter, 94, 146, 356, 475.

* Imports of Wheat into Great Britain from Foreign Countries.

Years.	Quarters.	Price per Qr.	Years.	Quarters.	Price per Qr.
1834	64,653	39s. 8d.	1839	2,590,734	70s. 6d.
1835	28,483	35s. 3d.	1840	2,389,732	65s. 4d.
1836	24,826	57s. 9d.	1841	2,619,702	64s. 4d.
1837	244,087	55s. 10d.	1842	2,977,302	57s. 3d.
1838	1,854,452	64s. 7d.			

—Porter, 140. Tooke *On Prices*, ii. 390, and iii. 413.

CHAP. XLI. 1841.

succession had come to tell with decisive and ruinous effect upon the whole commercial and manufacturing interests of the country. Nor will it appear surprising that, in England and Wales alone, the paupers had risen in the latter year to 1,427,000, of whom 85,000 were able-bodied, being about an eleventh of the entire population.*

18. Immense difficulties in finance, and from the inadequate national armaments.

When such was the state of the country, it was next to impossible to see where an increase of revenue was to be looked for, or even the existing annual deficit of £2,500,000 of be filled up. Yet was it absolutely necessary to make a great effort in finance, and that without delay, for this deficit, large as it was, promised to be doubled in the ensuing year by the enormous expenses of the Affghanistan expedition, which had already cost

* PAUPERS RELIEVED IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Years.	Paupers.	Of whom able-bodied.
1840,	1,199,529	...
1841,	1,299,048	...
1842,	1,427,187	85,171
1843,	1,539,490	99,196

—PORTER, p. 94.

The following official table exhibits a melancholy picture of the effect of this long-continued distress upon the duration and chances of life, especially in manufacturing and mining districts, where the chances of life are, under the most favourable circumstances, so precarious :—

DIED OUT OF 10,000 PERSONS BORN IN—

		Died under 5.	Died under 20.	Died under 40.	Lived above 40.
	Rutlandshire,	2865	3756	5031	4969
	London,	3805	4580	6111	3869
Manufacturing Districts.	Bradford,	4687	5896	7061	2939
	Macclesfield,	4462	5889	7300	2700
	Wigan,	4790	5911	7117	2883
	Preston,	4947	6083	7462	2538
	Bury,	4864	6017	7319	2601
	Stockport,	4879	6005	7367	2633
	Bolton,	4939	6113	7459	2541
	Leeds,	5286	6213	7441	2559
	Holbeck,	5090	6133	7337	2663

The immense proportion of deaths in the manufacturing districts under five years of age, being from 47 to 51 per cent in them all, and about double of those in the rural under the same age, is particularly remarkable, and apparently points to some fixed law of nature.—See the Table in *Parl. Deb.*, lix. 687, Sept. 28, 1841 ; and DOUBLEDAY, ii. 330.

£10,000,000, and left a deficit of £2,500,000 on the Indian revenue, which could only be made up from the exchequer of Great Britain. Add to this, that not only had France been irritated in the highest degree by the course pursued by England in the Levant, but a new cause of discord, to be immediately noticed, had sprung up about Otaheite and its sable queen, Pomare, which threatened still farther to embroil the two nations. Incessant demands were daily made on the Government for additional troops, both from the colonies and the manufacturing districts of Great Britain; but yet the national forces were only 92,000, exclusive of India, of whom more than a half were absorbed by the colonies. And as the disturbed state of Ireland required more than a half of the 45,000 left in the British Islands to be permanently stationed in that country, the force in England was so much reduced, that we have the authority of the late Lord Hardinge for the assertion, that when he came into office in 1841, if an invasion from France had taken place, he could not have collected, after garrisoning the sea fortresses, more than 10,000 men and 42 guns to defend London, and the greater part of the latter were so crazy, that if taken into a wet clay field they would have gone to pieces.* At this period Louis Philippe had 300,000 regular soldiers disposable in France; and while England had only ten ships of the line afloat in the Mediterranean, France had seventeen.

19. Great distress in the manufacturing districts.

As might naturally have been expected, this long-continued and poignant suffering produced at length serious disturbances, which broke out in the manufacturing districts. Indeed, the amount of distress ascertained to exist by the Committee of Inquiry, appointed by the Ministry in the autumn of 1841, was such, that the only surprising thing was, how a universal disruption of society did not take place. In Carlisle, one-fourth of the

* The Author had this from Lord Hardinge's own lips, and he made the same statement afterwards in Parliament.

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

inhabitants were found to be in a state bordering on starvation. In Stockport above half the master-spinners had failed, 3000 houses were shut up and uninhabited, and 5000 persons were walking the streets in a state of idleness. At Leeds the heap of stones broken by the paupers had swelled to 150,000 tons, when all the workmen employed on it were taken into the workhouse. In Manchester the sale of new clothes for the poorer classes had almost entirely ceased; nothing could find a market among them but shirts, and patches to mend the old garments. The condition of the shopkeepers, especially of the humbler class, was scarcely less distressing, while poor-rates were daily increasing beyond all precedent; their trade had sunk to a third, often not more than a tenth, of what it had been five years before. In Dorsetshire, the wages of an able-bodied labourer were only 4s. a-week, and the best could not earn more than 6s., and this with wheat at 70s. the quarter. In a word, the condition of the labouring poor in all the manufacturing districts was such that it could not by possibility become worse without multitudes being swept by absolute famine into an untimely grave.[1]

[1] Spectator, 1842, 27, 32, 337, 630, 637; Mart. ii. 520, 521.

20. Seriousriots in England in autumn 1842.

With all the magnanimous patience and long-suffering of the working-classes, it could not be expected that this universal distress in the manufacturing districts could continue for any great length of time without producing acts of insubordination and violence; and owing to the small military force in the country, they were of such a kind as to excite the most serious apprehension in the Government. The pitmen in the coal districts, and the miners in the iron, were particularly riotous; for their wages, though much reduced, were *not so low as to preclude effort*, and they fell under the guidance of delegates and itinerant orators, who arrayed them in trades-unions, the usual sad termination at this period of general distress, in order, by force and violence, to arrest the fall of wages. At Dudley, Stourbridge, Merthyr-Tydvil, and several other places in South Wales, there were

serious riots requiring the interposition of the military. In the Potteries, a body of six thousand men collected together, and kept Staffordshire in a continual state of anxiety and alarm. In Manchester and its vicinity the influx of rioters became so great in August 1842, that it evidently proceeded from some common design, and the whole troops which London could spare, including a regiment of the Guards, were despatched, at two hours' notice, by railway to the scene of danger. Even after their arrival, the forces of the insurgents were so large that it appeared at one time as if the whole of Lancashire was in their possession. Mills were stopped, machinery destroyed, windows smashed, and threatening letters sent in every direction. Three rioters were shot dead by the military at Barslem, and several wounded. Lady Peel received an anonymous letter which intimated that on a certain night Sir Robert's splendid seat, Drayton Manor, would be burned down. She had the courage to remain after procuring a guard, and the threatened attack was not made. It was fully ascertained that these violent acts were organised and directed by the Chartist leaders, and a sense of this, joined to the presence of a large military force collected from all quarters in the district, at length restored a forced tranquillity.[1]

[1] Morning Post, Aug. 1842; Spectator, 1842, 800; Mart. ii. 522, 523; Morning Chron. 1842.

22. Still more serious riots in Scotland. Aug. 1842.

In Scotland matters assumed a still more formidable aspect; for the people there, slow to move, and not readily excited, are tenacious of purpose, and, when once fairly roused, are capable of the most desperate acts. There is a certain amount of distress which so paralyses the mind as to render disturbance impossible; there is another which inflames it. Paisley, in Renfrewshire, in August 1842, had attained the former stage; for there were seventeen thousand persons out of employment, or working for 2½d. a-day; and so sunk were their spirits, that they remained quiet, and even recruiting for the army had ceased. In Lanarkshire the case was different; the colliers' and iron-miners' wages had sunk from 5s. to 2s. 9d. or 2s. 6d. a-day; but even the reduced sum was

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

capable not only of supporting life, but maintaining vigour. The consequence was, that a great strike took place of the colliers and iron-miners in that county, in the first week of August 1842, for an advance of wages, which soon came to embrace fifteen thousand persons. The men on strike openly declared that they were not going to starve when the land was covered with food; that there were potatoes enough in the fields, and corn in the barnyards; and that they would help themselves. They were as good as their word. Dividing themselves into detachments of a hundred or a hundred and fifty each, armed with muskets and clubs, they entered at night into all the most tempting fields of potatoes or barnyards of corn, and forcibly carried off the produce before the eyes of the trembling proprietors. So general did this species of depredation become, that every field or yard where provisions were to be found in the mineral districts of the country, required to be guarded at night by armed men, as is the case in the worst-ordered parts of the East; and the whole night long a continued roll of firearms was to be heard in these districts, proceeding either from the guards firing to intimidate the depredators, or the latter to enforce their iniquitous designs. To complete the public danger, the only regular regiment in the country was drawn away, at the very worst of the disturbance, to form an escort for the Queen in her progress from Dundee to Blair-Atholl, where her Majesty was to pass the autumn; and the barracks in Glasgow, containing a considerable depot of arms, were left under the charge of a dismounted body of eighteen invalid troopers, of whom only *five* were fit for duty.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge.

22. Measures of repression adopted.

The great thing, in the first instance, was to prevent this extraordinary state of things from coming to the knowledge of the insurgents in the mining districts, who would instantly have taken advantage of it. For this purpose orders were given to have the barrack-gates open, and to parade the few invalids in an ostentatious manner during the day in the yard, but to have everything ready to

repel an assault at night. By these means the absence of the main body was never discovered till after they had returned; but even when they had done so, and a few troops of horse and companies of infantry were stationed in the disturbed mineral districts, it was no easy matter to know how to make head against the systematic depredation which, over a space of fifteen miles square, was going forward. So perfect was the system of espionage established, that wherever the military went with any of the county magistrates during the night, everything was quiet, and not a vestige of disorder was to be seen; but meanwhile the distant report of firearms, which lasted as long as it was dark, proved that it had commenced or was apprehended in other quarters where there were no means of resistance; and reports of half-a-dozen burglaries or forcible invasion of fields were received next morning. At length it was stopped in a very singular way. The sheriff of Lanarkshire issued a proclamation, recommending no resistance to the bodies of armed men which invaded the farmers' premises, but enjoining the people to watch the retiring body at a distance, and send information to him of the place they had gone to with their spoil; and next night he surrounded the village with a troop of yeomanry, who turned out with the greatest alacrity on the occasion, searched every house, and carried off all the men of those houses in which suspected articles were found, for judicial examination.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge.

23. Their effects, and results of the strike.

This system, vigorously applied in several instances, let the insurgents see they might lose more than they gained by their nocturnal depredations, and they generally ceased. But the colliers continued the strike with dogged resolution the whole winter, and it terminated only in March 1843 from sheer exhaustion, and when the men were compelled to accept lower wages than their employers had originally offered. This strike lasted seven months, kept at least fifty thousand persons all that time in a state of privation of the severest kind, doubled while it lasted the price of coal, and cost

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

the nation at least £600,000. Such was the exasperation of the miners during its continuance, that on one occasion, when the military had been imprudently withdrawn from Airdrie, the centre of the mining district, by the authorities, a mob of three thousand persons got up in an hour, shut up the police, twenty in number, in a house, and set fire to the building; and it was only from the accidental circumstance of the hay ignited and thrust in to the aid of the conflagration being damp, from the first shower which had fallen for two months, that the whole police, with five prisoners whom they had in custody, were not burned alive.[1] *

Oct. 2.

[1] Personal knowledge.

24. Skilful use made of these circumstances.

This universal distress in the manufacturing and mining districts complicated in a very serious degree Sir R. Peel's position, and may be regarded as one of the chief causes of the split in his party which so soon after took place. The Anti-Corn-Law League made a skilful use of the general suffering, and turned it to admirable account in their assault on the ancient protective system of the country. They constantly held it forth as having arisen entirely from the monopoly of agricultural produce which the landlords enjoyed, which prevented other nations from being enriched by the sale to us of their grain, and thereby disabled them from purchasing in return any considerable amount of our manufactures. In proof of this, they triumphantly referred to the opposite condition of the manufacturing and commercial interests in the country, the former of which was involved in universal and deep distress, while the latter was enjoying comparative affluence, with produce of all kinds at nearly double the price they had brought some years before.[2] It must be confessed that the argument and reference were plausible in the highest degree, insomuch that not only the ignorant multitude, who were actuated merely by a sense of suffering, but many sensible and thoughtful

[2] Mart. ii. 529, 530; Ann. Reg. 1843, 3, 4.

* The Author, suddenly sent for in the night, arrived with the military at two in the morning, and arrested the delinquent leaders, who were transported at the next assizes.

persons, began to embrace the opinion, that the real cause of the long-continued commercial distress had at last been discovered, and that there was no chance of its being removed until an entire freedom in the commerce of grain was established.

25. Opposite arguments adduced by the Anti-Corn-Law League, and real causes of the distress.

The anti-Corn-Law orators used arguments directly opposite to each other, according as they addressed agricultural or manufacturing assemblages; and yet, strange to say, they were readily listened to by both those opposite parties. To the master manufacturers they held forth that the reduction which Free Trade would immediately make in the price of grain would necessarily draw after it a corresponding fall in the wages of labour, and thus enable them to regain the foreign markets which had of late been visibly slipping from their hands. The master manufacturers all believed this, and it was this conviction which rendered them such strenuous supporters of the anti-Corn-Law agitation. To the operative workmen they affirmed that the stimulus the change would give to trade would be such as to cause their wages to rise instead of falling with the decline in the price of provisions, and that by supporting the League they would realise what had been promised them by the Reform Bill, but never yet obtained—namely, a duplication of wages and halving of the cost of food. To the landlords and farmers they held out the prospect of such a reduction in the price of manufactured articles of all sorts, and such an increased consumption of grain from the universal prosperity, as would more than compensate the fall in its price. Strange to say, these opposite and contradictory views were alike embraced by the respective audiences to which they were addressed; the wish, in every instance, being the father to the thought, and preparing a willing reception of such arguments as promised a relief by the change to the suffering under which they almost all laboured. And yet was that suffering in reality owing to entirely different causes from what either party imagined, and certain to be dreadfully aggravated,

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

instead of being removed, by the remedies proposed for its alleviation. It arose from five bad seasons in succession acting upon a monetary system rendered entirely dependent on the retention of gold, which the great importation of grain paid for in specie rendered it impossible to retain; coupled with the great diminution of the export trade to America, which, in consequence of General Jackson's democratic crusade against the banks in the United States in 1837, had sunk *from twelve to three millions and a half.** As such, the promised free trade in grain, and consequent increase of the export drain of gold in adverse seasons, could not fail to be the greatest possible aggravation of the danger to the mercantile classes, and so the nation was too fatally taught in the years 1847 and 1848. But no one then anticipated these dangers; and meanwhile the great influence on public opinion which the Anti-Corn-Law League had obtained, augmented seriously the difficulties of Sir R. Peel's position, for he could not by possibility please both sections of his supporters, nor secure the support of the urban without alienating the county constituencies.

26. Short session of 1841.

Parliament adjourned, after a short session, on 7th October 1841. The only step of importance taken during its continuance was the addition of £3,000,0000 to the National Debt, in the form of a loan to meet the deficiency of the year, and the certain deficit of the next, before any new measures of finance could be adopted. Ministers claimed the leisure of the recess, which was little more than three months, to prepare their measures to meet the crisis which had arisen. It was no easy matter to do so, for they had to close a deficit which for four years had

* British Manufactures exported to America—declared Value.

1835,	£10,568,455	1840,	£5,283,020
1836,	12,425,605	1841,	7,098,642
1837,	4,695,225	1842,	3,528,807
1838,	7,585,710	1843,	5,013,504
1839,	8,839,204		

Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, p. 360, 3d edit.

been eating like a cancer into the vitals of the State, by raising an increased revenue out of a suffering and starving people. The attempt, however, was made, and in a courageous spirit; and the remainder of this work is little more than an exposition, so far as the domestic history of England is concerned, of the consequences of the measures adopted for its furtherance. From this time down to the fall of Sebastopol, the annals of its internal legislation, instead of a confused and complicated tissue of abortive or contradictory measures which no art can render interesting, and which the historian himself has great difficulty in understanding, exhibit a steady and consistent system, which, for good or for evil, produced durable and important results, and which must for ever command the attention of mankind, from the immense consequences in both hemispheres with which it was attended.

27. Opening of the Parliament of 1842. Feb. 3.

Parliament met on the 3d February 1842; and the anxiety of the nation was wound up to the very highest pitch as to the remedial measures which were to be proposed. It was generally understood, from the character of the Prime Minister and the great strength of his Government, that they would be of a sweeping and decisive character; and the agricultural party had already taken the alarm in consequence of the retirement, in the middle of January, of the Duke of Buckingham from the Cabinet and office of Lord Privy Seal, who was succeeded by the Duke of Buccleuch. As he was the uncompromising friend of the landed interest, his retirement from the Cabinet was justly regarded as of ominous import to that portion of the community. The session was opened with unusual splendour, as well from the great concourse of members whom the importance of the measures to be submitted to their consideration had attracted, as from the presence of the King of Prussia, who had come to England to stand sponsor for the Prince of Wales, and who was present with her Majesty on the occasion. The joyous

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

event of the birth of an heir to the throne had taken place on the 9th November preceding. The Queen's Speech noticed with deep regret the continued distress in the manufacturing districts of the country, and bore testimony to the exemplary patience and fortitude with which it had been borne, and recommended to the consideration of the House "the state of the laws which affect the importation of corn, and of other articles, the produce of foreign countries." The Address was carried in both Houses without a division; the attention of all parties, and of the whole country, being fixed on the remedial measures expected from Sir R. Peel with a degree of intensity which never had been witnessed on any former occasion.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1842, 2, 3; Mart. ii. 529.

28. Sir R. Peel's plan.

The eventful debate came on on the 9th February, in a very crowded House, surrounded by a still greater multitude around the doors, which saluted the members as they passed with loud cheers or groans according as they were understood to favour or oppose the removal of the duties on grain. Cries of "No Sliding Scale!" "Total Repeal!" "Fixed Duty!" were heard on all sides. Corn at the moment was 62s. 9d. the quarter, and they fully expected by the measures in preparation it would in a few weeks be at 45s. Below the bar were the Duke of Cambridge and numerous members of the Upper House. Six hundred anti-Corn-Law delegates marched down to the House, and on being refused admission to the lobby, thronged the doors, and added to the general excitement. Already, since the meeting of Parliament, 994 petitions had been presented for the total repeal of the Corn Laws. Sir R. Peel looked grave; he listened unmoved to the cries for the entire removal of the obnoxious duty. At length, amidst breathless silence, he rose and said in substance: "The distress which every one sees and laments, and which has now continued for five years, may be ascribed to the establishment of joint-stock banks, and the connection subsisting between them and our manufacturing establishments, and the consequent immi-

gration of labourers from the agricultural to the manufacturing and mining districts; the immense building speculations which have recently been going on; the great increase of mechanical power; the reaction of the monetary crisis in the United States, and the consequent diminution of the demand for our manufactures: from thence the interruption of our commerce with China, and the apprehension, which has hardly yet subsided, of the renewal of a general war in Europe. Extend as you will your foreign commerce, you may depend upon it that it is not a necessary consequence that the means of employment for manual labour will be proportionally augmented. While I admit the existence of commercial distress, while I deplore the suffering it has occasioned, I feel bound to declare that I cannot attribute the distress to the extent to which by some it is supposed to be imputable to the Corn Laws.[1]

[1] 1 Parl. Deb. lx. 203; Ann. Reg. 1842, 16, 17; Mart. ii. 529, 530.

29. Continued.

"The export of our manufactures has fallen off considerably in the last two years; their declared value in 1840 fell short of 1839 by £1,817,000. This has chiefly been owing to the great diminution of exports to the United States, which in 1839 were £8,939,000, and had fallen in 1840 to £5,283,000.* This is no doubt a very serious defalcation; but it is fortunate that it is in course of being compensated, and more than compensated, by the great increase in the exports to our own colonies. In 1837 they were £11,208,000; in 1840 they had risen to £15,497,000, and they are still in a course of progressive increase.† The state of our trade with the principal countries of Europe is equally decisive against the

* In 1842, the year in which Sir Robert Peel was speaking, the exports of Great Britain to the United States were only £3,500,000, while six years before they had been £12,500,000.

† Exports to our Colonies—declared Value.

1837, . .	£11,208,000	1839, . .	£14,363,000
1838, . .	12,208,000	1840, . .	15,497,000.

—Sir Robert Peel's Speech, *Parl. Deb.* lx. 207.

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

idea that the depression which exists is to be ascribed to the operation of the Corn Laws. Our exports to Germany, Holland, and Belgium, so far from having declined when these laws were in operation, have, on the contrary, steadily increased. The exports to these three countries in 1837 were £8,742,000; in 1838, £9,606,000; in 1839, £9,660,000; in 1840, £9,704,000; so that, even with respect to those countries from whom we derive our chief supplies of grain when we stand in need of it, which are supposed to be such formidable competitors in manufactures, and from which the demand for British manufactures is said to be rapidly diminishing on account of our exclusion of their produce, it still appears that there has been, on the whole, a progressive increase in the amount of our commerce carried on with them. I cannot therefore infer that the operation of the Corn Laws is to be charged with the depression which is at present so severely felt in many branches of trade. I see other causes in operation which are sufficient in a great degree to account for the evils which no one can deny to exist.

30. Continued.

"Those who argue against the continuance of the Corn Laws are enabled to appeal to arguments which give them a very great advantage. They urge that they impose a tax upon bread, upon the subsistence of the people, and that this burden is imposed for the benefit of a peculiar class. It is easy to see what impression an argument of this sort is calculated to make, especially upon those who suppose they are suffering under the system complained of. A comparison is often made also between the price of corn in this and other countries where it is grown cheaper, and the inference is immediately drawn, that if the people of this country were put on the same footing with respect to the articles of subsistence, they would be benefited by the whole amount of the effected reduction in price. It appears to me that any conclusion founded upon such a position will be *altogether erroneous*. The question is, whether you will improve the condition of the

labouring classes by effecting a reduction in the price of their food? No position can be more unfounded. The true question is, not what is the price of food, but what is the command which existing wages give the labouring classes over all that constitutes the enjoyments of life, whether they be necessaries or luxuries? Judging by this standard, the labouring classes in Great Britain have no reason to envy those of any other country. There is no greater error than to suppose that a great reduction in the price of various articles, and particularly of food, must necessarily lead to a great increase in the comforts and enjoyments of the labouring classes in this country.

31. Continued.

"So far from this being the case, the fact appears to be directly the reverse. Generally speaking, wherever food is very low-priced, the condition of the labouring poor is miserable. I will begin with Prussia. I admit that meat is dearer in this country, that corn is dearer, that all the great articles of human sustenance are much dearer here than in Prussia. But what then? Are the people better off in Prussia than in this country? Do they enjoy and have at their command a greater share of the necessaries and conveniences of life? So far from doing so, it appears from the evidence collected by Dr Bowring, and referred to in the Report of the Committee for the Revision of the Import Duties, that while each individual in England consumes, on an average, a quarter of wheat a-year, in Prussia the consumption is only a barrel, or an eighth part as much, the difference being made up of rye, a very inferior grain. Then as to sugar, the average consumption in Britain is seventeen pounds a-head; in France it is only five pounds a-head; in the states of the German League, four pounds; in Europe generally, two and a half pounds. It is calculated that the people of this country consume fifty pounds of meat annually, at the very lowest. Some writers say one hundred pounds; but take it at the lowest figure, it is much more than they consume in Prussia, which is only thirty-five pounds. Examples of this sort, to

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

which many others may be added in regard to tea, coffee, tobacco, butter, and other articles of general consumption from every country in Europe, prove how fallacious the idea is, that a low price of provisions is an evidence of general prosperity and well-being. On the contrary, it is generally the reverse. A low price of provisions is an indication of a small demand for the better sorts of them, owing to a still lower price of labour.

32. Continued.

"In arriving at a just and safe conclusion on this subject, it is most important to determine, if possible, whether, in ordinary years, this country is able to supply itself with the necessary amount of provisions. I am by no means prepared to admit that it is not. If, indeed, we were to form our opinion from the last four years, I should be compelled to conclude that we were dependent for a large portion of our annual supply on foreign nations, for our annual importation of foreign corn into this country, during that period, has been 2,300,000 quarters. But they were all uncommonly bad seasons. If we go back for a longer period, one of twelve or thirteen years, it will be found that the whole did not amount to more than twelve or thirteen millions of quarters; for from July 5, 1828, to July 5, 1841, the whole wheat and wheaten flour imported was just 13,470,000 quarters, being somewhat less than a million of quarters a-year. For six years, from 1830 to 1836, the importation of foreign wheat was almost nothing. The conclusion to be drawn from this is, that there is no ground for supposing that the country, in ordinary seasons, is not capable of supporting itself from its own resources, and that to look for any rapid or great change in the condition of the working classes from any extensive change of the Corn Laws, would subject you to great disappointment. My firm belief is—I am now speaking with reference to those who wish for an absolute repeal of those laws—that if the House of Commons should be induced to pledge itself to a total repeal, which *we on this side of the House deprecate so*

much, you will, without permanently relieving the manufacturing, superadd to it the severest agricultural distress.

"With respect to those who advocate a fixed instead of a variable duty on corn, it must be recollected, that whatever odium attaches to the imposition of a variable duty, must equally apply to a fixed. Both proceed on the principle that agriculture requires protection, and both must in the end be defended by the same arguments. If I had been of opinion that a fixed duty was preferable to a variable one, I should not have hesitated to propose a fixed duty for the adoption of this House. But I do not see how a fixed duty could either be maintained in periods of scarcity, or how, if maintained, it could be a sufficient protection for our agriculturists. You cannot expect in bad seasons to be independent of foreign supply; but I retain the opinion which I expressed some time ago, that it is *of the utmost importance to the interests of this country that you should be as much as possible independent of foreign supply.* By this I do not mean that you should be in a state of absolute independence, for that perhaps is impossible, but that we should be in that state, that if we resort to foreign nations for supplies, those supplies should be for the purpose of making up deficiencies, rather than as the chief sources of subsistence. I cannot bring myself to the conclusion that there must be a periodical, or even an annual, importation of foreign corn, in order to provide for the wants of the people of this country. Therefore I think that a variable or sliding scale, as it is called, is required, for it alone can meet the cases alike of abundant harvests, when importation might be injurious at one time, and deficient harvests, which might render it indispensable at another. It is by this means that you are most likely to realise the great desideratum in political science—that of an abundant supply with a steady remunerating price.[1] I should say that for the interests of agriculture it would be desirable that the price of corn

[1] Parl. Deb. xlix. 202, 213, 227; Ann. Reg. 1842, 16, 23.

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

should if possible be made to vary between 54s. and 58s. The average of the last ten years is 56s. 11d.; and I do not think that it is for the interests of agriculture that it should be higher, nor do I see any lasting advantage to manufactures from its being lower."

34. The Ministerial plan.

The Ministerial plan consisted in the adoption of a new sliding-scale, considerably lower than the former, but still calculated to afford a considerable protection to agriculture. At 50s., and under 51s., the duty on wheat was to be 20s., and from that point it was to fall 1s. with every 1s. the price rose till it reached 73s., when it was to be 1s. only, and remain fixed at that amount above that point. On barley, the duty at 25s. the quarter was to be 11s., falling with every 1s. rise in the price to 37s., when it was to be 1s. only. On oats at 18s. the quarter the duty was to be 8s., falling with every 1s. rise in the price till it reached 27s., when it was to be 1s. only. It was part of Sir R. Peel's plan that this reduction on the duties levied on foreign grain should go hand-in-hand with a proportional reduction in the duties on nearly all other articles of import—in particular, live animals, meat, and almost all kinds of manufactured articles; but the paramount importance of the proposed alteration on the Corn Laws led to the debate and sense of the House being taken first on them alone.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1842, 27; Parl. Deb. lx. 235, 236.

35. Answer of Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston.

On the other hand, it was contended by Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston: "It is now a fixed principle of political philosophy, that the best way to regulate commercial matters is not to legislate at all on the subject, but to leave the seller, or producer, and the purchaser, to adjust their respective interests as they themselves may incline. Corn is no exception to this rule. The principle of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, is not less applicable to that than to other objects of commerce. Adam Smith, it is true, states, as an exception to this principle, the case of a number of persons having been long engaged in a parti-

cular branch of manufacture, in which case humanity may require that the freedom of trade should only be restored by slow gradations. Mr Malthus, too, another great authority, admits that corn is an exception, as you ought as far as possible to render the country independent of foreign states for its food. But there seems to be no solid foundation for the latter exception. We are not, we cannot be independent of foreign nations, any more than they can of us. It is admitted that, for the last four years, 2,300,000 quarters of foreign corn have been imported; that is to say, two millions of our people have been dependent on foreign countries for their daily food. At least five millions of our people are dependent on the supplies of cotton from America, of foreign wool, or foreign silk. Independence of other countries, therefore, is a chimera which it is in vain for a great commercial nation to pursue; and even were it reached, it would be attended with no visible benefit. It is impossible that the time should ever arise when you might not find some part of the world from which you might derive your supplies. The true independence of a great commercial nation is to be found, not in raising all the produce it requires within its own bounds, but in attaining such a pre-eminence in commerce that the time can never arise when other nations will not be compelled, for their own sakes, to minister to its wants.

36. Continued.

"The duties proposed to be levied by the new scale are in the highest degree prohibitory. 20s. are to be levied on wheat when the price is 51s. Now it appears from the consular returns, that the usual price of wheat free on board at Dantzic is 40s., to which, if 10s. 6d. be added for the price of the transit, we have 50s. 6d. as the price at which Dantzic wheat can be sold in this country. If to this you add 20s. duty, you raise the price of imported wheat at once to 70s., a price at which it never can be imported with profit, unless prices have

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

reached famine levels. Indeed, the new scale will exclude all importation till prices are above 61s.; and when it does begin, owing to the prices having risen, and the harbours being practically opened, the result will be, a great import of foreign grain, a great consequent drain on the Bank for gold to pay for it, an immediate contraction of issues, and widespread commercial distress. Many millions must be paid, and you have no means of doing so by sending out goods, because you have no regular trade.

37. Continued.

"There is nothing of such importance to this country as to extend its commercial relations with the United States of America. There are to be found nations rapidly increasing in population and resources, which could furnish you to any extent with the means of subsistence, and take in return any conceivable amount of your manufactures. Around the great inland seas, formed in its progress to the ocean by the St Lawrence, is a cluster of five nations arising, extending from the Lakes on the north to the Ohio on the south. The territory they inhabit is twice as large as France, and six times as large as England. It contains 180,000,000 of acres, a large portion of which is of surpassing fertility. The population of this cluster of states already exceeds 300,000: if the same rate of progress shall be maintained for the next twelve years, it will contain 12,000,000. Yet are they at such a distance from this country, that they can never be formidable competitors to our farmers; for even without a duty, wheat can never be sent from thence to Britain for less than 43s. to 47s. They would be glad to receive your manufactures in exchange for the food which they send you; but how can they do so if you refuse to receive their grain, or do what is the same thing, load it with such duties as make it not worth their while to send it? Were it otherwise—were a free commercial intercourse established with them, there is no saying how long you might continue to furnish them

with manufactured goods, or how extensive and lucrative might be the commerce you might carry on with them. However rising may be the manufactures of the United States, there is not enough of that species of industry, and probably there will not be for a very long time, to furnish with clothes and other articles of rude comfort this great population.

38. Continued.

"If a moderate fixed duty were established, you would have a complete change effected in the corn trade. Instead of gambling transactions, which the system of taking the average prices in the great towns has a direct tendency to foster, you would establish a sound and advantageous trade; and instead of the merchant hurrying at every rise in price to the foreign market on the Continent, and thus needlessly enhancing the price of corn, you would establish a steady and well-regulated barter, which would at the same time supply your wants, and establish new fields for the consumption of the produce of your manufacturing industry. Under such a system the merchant would make his arrangements for buying a supply of corn in those places where it was cheapest, and would bring it home at a period when he thought it would be best disposed of both to the country and himself. Above all, by such a system you would extend greatly your commercial relations both of export and import with the United States. Were this system once thoroughly established and acted upon, England would become the great corn emporium of the world, and a supply of food would be secured for its inhabitants both at the cheapest and the most equable rates.

39. Concluded.

"Why is the earth on which we live divided into different zones and climates? Why do different countries yield different productions to people experiencing similar wants? Why are they intersected with mighty rivers, the natural highways of nations? Why are lands the most distant brought into contact by that very ocean which seems to separate them? Why, sir, it is that

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

man may be made dependent on man. It is that the exchange of commodities may be accompanied by the extension and diffusion of knowledge, by the interchange of mutual benefits engendering mutual kind feelings, multiplying and confirming friendly relations. It is, that Commerce may freely go forth, leading Civilisation with one hand and Peace with the other, to render mankind happier, wiser, better. This is the dispensation of Providence, this is the decree of that Power which created and disposed the universe. But in the face of it, with arrogant presumptuous folly, the dealers in restrictive duties fly, fettering the inborn energies of man, and setting up their miserable legislation instead of the great standing laws of nature."[1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. lx. 346, 619; Ann. Reg. 1838, 41.

40. The bill passes both Houses, and various amendments are thrown out. April 5.

The House divided upon this debate, when there appeared for Lord John Russell's amendment 226, against it 349—majority for Sir R. Peel, 123. This division was of course decisive of the fate of the measure in the Lower House: the second reading passed by a majority of 284 to 176. An amendment, proposed by Mr Christopher, and supported by the whole strength of the Protectionists, with the object of raising the scale of duties, was rejected by a majority of 306 to 104; a majority which was justly regarded as ominous of the fate of the whole Corn Laws at no distant period. A resolution proposed by Mr Cobden on the third reading, to the effect of abrogating the duties altogether, was in like manner rejected by 236 to 86. Thus, so far as could be gathered from the votes of the House, it was resolved to support the middle course, stand by the Minister, and to avoid the extremes on either side. In the House of Lords the bill was, upon the whole, favourably received, although the Duke of Buckingham expressed the greatest alarm at the measure. It was supported, however, by Lord Winchilsea and a number of the ultra-

* The concluding striking paragraph is taken *verbatim* from Lord Palmerston's splendid peroration.—*Parl. Deb.* xlix. 619.

Tories, as well as the whole Ministerialists. The second reading passed without opposition; but Lord Melbourne afterwards moved the substitution of a fixed duty for the sliding-scale, and Lord Brougham the total abolition of all duties, both of which were rejected, the former by a majority of 117 to 49, the latter by 87 to 6. The bill then passed and became law without any farther opposition.[1]

[1] 1 Ann. Reg. 1842, 41, 79; Parl. Deb. lx. 620, 1082, 1167, lxii. 75, 722, 804.

41. Reception of the measure in the country.

During the progress of the measure, the nation, as might have been expected on a question of so much importance, and so interesting to large bodies of men on both sides, was seriously agitated on the subject. At first great dissatisfaction was expressed in the manufacturing towns, and in some of them Sir R. Peel was even burned in effigy for having proposed the retention of any duty at all on foreign grain. The landed proprietors also, and farmers in several places—especially those districts where wheat was largely grown—though not so noisy in the expression of their disapprobation, were not less the prey of serious apprehension as to the ability of British agriculture, oppressed as it was with so many burdens, to maintain its ground against foreign competition. By degrees, however, these feelings were softened down on both sides, and the nation generally acquiesced in the change, regarding it, though for different reasons, as if not the best that either could have desired, at least the best which, under existing circumstances, could be obtained.[2]

[2] 2 Ann. Reg. 1842, 53; Mart. ii. 532.

42. Financial difficulties of Sir R. Peel.

The alteration of the duties on grain, though not the least important, was but a part of the comprehensive plan of the Prime Minister. In addition to the loud cry for the repeal of the Corn Laws, he had to face a difficulty of a still more pressing kind, arising from the deficiency of the revenue, amounting already to £2,500,000, and which, with the necessary expenses falling on this country from the Affghanistan expedition, could not be estimated at less than £4,700,000. How

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

to meet this with the resources of an impoverished realm, and a people who, so far from being disposed to acquiesce in an increase, were loudly clamouring for a reduction of taxation, appeared almost an impossibility; and yet the attempt absolutely required to be made, if England would avoid descending at once from her high position in the scale of nations. Sir Robert Peel attempted it with a courage and manliness worthy of the highest admiration; and the speech with which he ushered in his important measures was one of the most remarkable of his long and brilliant career. It was on the 11th March that, in a very crowded House, and amidst breathless silence, he thus expressed himself:—[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxi. 423; Ann. Reg. 1842, 72, 73.

43. Sir R. Peel's speech on introducing his financial measures.

"No one can feel more strongly than I do the importance and extent of the duty that now devolves on me, and my own inadequacy to its discharge. But I should be unworthy of the trust committed to me, I should be unworthy of my place as Minister of the British Crown, if I could feel disheartened or discouraged, if I could feel anything but that buoyancy and contentedness of mind which ought to sustain every public man on entering on the discharge of a public duty—conscious that he is actuated by no motives that are not honourable and just, and feeling a deep and intimate conviction that, according to the best conclusion of his imperfect and fallible judgment, the measures which he intends to propose will be conducive to the welfare, I may say essential to the prosperity, of his country. We live in an important era of human affairs. There may be a natural tendency to overrate the magnitude of the crisis in which we live, or those particular events with which we are ourselves conversant; but I think it is impossible to deny that the period in which our lot and the lot of our fathers has been cast—the period which has elapsed since the first outbreak of the first French Revolution—has been one of the most memorable that the history of the world will afford. The course which England has pur-

sued during that period will attract for ages to come the contemplation, and, I trust, the admiration of posterity. There will be a time when these countless millions that are sprung from our loins, occupying many parts of the globe, living under institutions different from ours, but speaking our language, will view with pride and admiration the example of constancy and fortitude which our fathers set during the momentous period of war. They will view with admiration our achievements by land and by sea, our determination to uphold the public credit, and all those qualities by which we were enabled ultimately to effect the deliverance of Europe. I am now addressing you after the duration of twenty-five years of peace. I am now exhibiting to you the financial difficulties and embarrassments in which you are placed, and my confident hope and belief is, that, following the example of those who have preceded you, you will look those difficulties in the face, and not refuse to make similar sacrifices to those which your fathers made for the purpose of upholding public credit.

44. Continued.

"You will bear in mind that this is no casual or occasional difficulty. You will bear in mind that there are indications among all the upper classes of increased comfort and enjoyment, of increased prosperity and wealth, and that concurrently with these indications there exists a mighty evil which has been growing up for the last seven years, and which you are now called upon to meet. You will not reconcile it to your consciences to hope for relief from diminished taxation. If you have the fortitude and constancy of which you have been set the example, you will not consent with folded arms to view the annual growth of this mighty evil. You will not adopt the miserable expedient of adding during peace, and in the midst of those indications of wealth and increasing prosperity, to the burdens which posterity will be called upon to bear. If you do permit this evil to continue, you must expect the severe but just judg-

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

ment of a reflecting and retrospective posterity. Your conduct will be contrasted with that of your fathers, under difficulties infinitely less pressing than theirs; with that of your fathers at the Mutiny at the Nore, and who, with a rebellion in Ireland and disaster abroad, submitted, with buoyant vigour and universal applause, with the Funds as low as 52, to a property-tax of 10 per cent. My confident hope and belief is, that now, when I devolve the responsibility upon you, you will prove yourselves worthy of your mission as the representatives of a mighty people; that you will not tarnish the fame which it is your duty to cherish as the most glorious inheritance; and that you will not impair the character for fortitude and good faith, which, in proportion as the empire of opinion supersedes and predominates over the empire of physical force, constitutes for every people, but above all for the people of England, the main instrument by which a powerful people can repel hostile aggression and maintain extended empire.

45. Continued.

"What, then, is to be done in this emergency, when remedies of no ordinary kind must be resorted to, if power is to be maintained or bankruptcy avoided? Indirect taxation has reached its limits, and can no longer be relied on. Last year the addition of 5 per cent on the Customs and Excise, instead of producing £5 per cent, as was expected, produced only 10s.; while the per-centage of 10 per cent on the assessed taxes produced considerably more than was expected. Are we, then, to go back to the old taxes? Shall we restore the postage duties? At present, the new packet-service being added, *the Post-office produces no revenue at all, but is rather a charge;* but the penny postage has not been long enough in operation to justify us in proposing an alteration upon it. Are the taxes to be restored upon wool, salt, and leather? That would be adding to the burdens of the already suffering portion of the community, to the relief of that which is in affluence; and in addi-

tion, many new contracts have been entered into upon the faith of their abolition, and salt in particular has been applied to many new purposes. A nation's revenue may sometimes be in the end increased by reduced taxation; but, in the first instance, it is always followed by a great diminution, and a very long time is always required to restore the amount. This principle is illustrated by what has happened with respect to the reduced duties on wine, tobacco, sugar, coffee, hemp, rum, and other articles. A mere reduction of duties, therefore, will not present a resource to meet the present emergency; and my settled opinion, my deep conviction is, that it has become necessary to make a great appeal to the holders of property.

46. Continued.

"My plan is this: to levy an income-tax not exceeding 7d. in the pound, or about 3 per cent, on all incomes above £150, including all funded property, whether in the hands of natives or foreigners. I estimate the incomes of lands in Great Britain at £39,400,000; houses, £25,000,000; mines, railroads, &c., £8,400,000; in all, £72,800,000. The total produce of this tax, excluding Ireland, I estimate at £3,771,000. As Ireland is to be withdrawn from the tax, I propose to add 1s. a-gallon to the tax on spirits, the consumption of which is again increased from the decline of the influence of the temperance pledge. From this source I expect £250,000 a-year; and from the equalisation of the stamp duty in that country with that in England, £160,000 more. Four shillings a-ton is to be laid on *exported* coals, from which I expect £200,000; in all, £4,380,000, which will cause a considerable surplus after covering the whole deficiency for the year, which I estimate at £2,500,000. And then the question remains, In what way can this surplus be best applied to improve the resources or lighten the industry of the nation? This surplus I propose to apply in the reduction of the import duties in our commercial tariff.

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

47. Continued.

"The principle on which this reduction is founded is, wherever the duty is trifling, and it is practicable, to abolish it altogether; to reduce the duty on raw materials to 5 per cent, upon articles partially manufactured to 12 per cent, and even on articles entirely manufactured, to cause it not to exceed 20 per cent. On 750 articles of import there is to be an entire remission or abatement of duty; on 450 it is left untouched. The total loss of reduction on the whole would not exceed £270,000. On sugar no reduction of duty, I regret to say, is at present practicable; but on coffee a very great diminution is proposed, bringing down the duty to 8d. a-pound on foreign, and 4d. on British. On timber, regarding Canada as an integral part of the empire, and equally entitled to protection, it is proposed to make the duty merely nominal when it comes from British possessions, and 25s. a-load when from foreign states. The loss thence arising will be about £600,000 a-year.* On the whole, these reductions, with the necessary increase of expenditure, will swell the deficit to £3,700,000; but as the proposed new taxes will bring in £4,300,000, there will be a surplus of some half million to apply to the support of our distant wars.

48. Concluded.

"I have a sincere and cordial respect for the interests which apprehend they will be affected by the reductions in the tariff; but communications with the principal parties likely to be affected by it have confirmed the Government in the opinion that these measures will be

* The duties proposed to be lowered, which excited the greatest alarm, were those which related to live cattle, sheep and swine, salted and dried meats, and on butter, eggs, cheese, and lard, and the substitution of a moderate duty on these articles. The proposed duties were:—

	Present Duty.	New Duty.
Live cattle,	Prohibited.	£1 0 a-head.
Beef (salt),	12s. a cwt.	0 8 a cwt.
Lard,	8s. „	0 2 „
Hams,	28s. „	0 14 „
Salmon,	Prohibited.	0 10 „
Herrings,	20s. a barrel.	0 10 „

—*Parl. Deb.* lxiii. 367, 371.

attended by great public advantage to all classes, not even excluding the agricultural, by the reduction which we propose to make in meat and cattle, and, above all, by removal of that complete prohibition which we found when we approached the subject. I know that many gentlemen who are strong advocates for free trade may consider that I have not gone far enough. I know that. I believe that in the general principle of free trade there is now no great difference of opinion, and that *all agree in the general rule 'that we should buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest.'* (Loud cheers from the Opposition.) I have stated the reasons on more than one occasion why I think the case of corn and sugar is an exception to this rule. I know that I may be met by the complaints of the gentlemen opposite as to the limited extent to which I have applied the principle to which I have adverted to these important articles. But I feel satisfied that it was inexpedient to apply such important changes as I have heard suggested to these important interests. I think it would be imprudent to increase the alarm which already prevails among these important classes. I think the Legislature has made as great a change as was prudent under the circumstances, and considering the existing relations between landlord and tenant, and the large amount of capital at present applied to the cultivation of the soil."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxi. 450, 464, 466, lxii. 444, 710; Ann. Reg. 1842, 72, 84.

49. Reception of the plan by the Opposition and the country.

No debate followed on this speech in the first instance; and the Opposition were so much impressed with the courage and grandeur of the change proposed, that for some days the demon of faction was almost laid asleep, and it was thought the measure would pass unanimously. By degrees, however, they recovered from their consternation, and efforts were made to get up a popular agitation against the essential parts of the proposed measure. This was no difficult matter; for although every one, of course, except the farmers, cordially acquiesced in the reduction of duties proposed by the new commercial tariff,

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

yet the feeling was by no means so unanimous in favour of the proposed substitute of an income-tax. Great alarm also prevailed in the grazing districts, that the admission of foreign cattle and salted meat would prove fatal to that portion of British, and still more Irish agriculture. The proposal, too, of an income-tax, excited no small degree of alarm, especially among the middle and trading classes, who dreaded the absorption of their profits, and exposure of their affairs, especially in a time of European peace, when the necessity of so rigorous an expedient was by no means apparent. Accordingly, the Opposition saw that this was the tender point to which all their efforts should be directed, and the main struggle took place on Lord John Russell's amendment condemnatory of that tax, which came on on the 4th April, and lasted four nights. But it was favourably received in the City, especially as indicating the resolution of the Government to uphold public credit, without having recourse to a loan, which was generally apprehended, and the Funds rose from 89 to 93 in consequence.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1842, 376, 84, 86; Mart. ii. 538.

50. Argument against the income-tax.

Against the tax it was urged by Lord John Russell in the Commons, and Lord Brougham in the Lords: "A direct tax on income ought never to be resorted to unless in some great emergency of public affairs — when an extraordinary expenditure has become necessary for a time, or in some pressure upon the finances of the country, which can be sustained by no other means. Such a tax ought on no account to form part of the ordinary revenue of the State, but should cease with the necessity which could alone justify its adoption; inasmuch as, besides all the other objections to which it is liable, its inquisitorial character is such as must always render it odious, however trifling may be the amount abstracted. The facility with which it is collected offers a constant temptation to extravagance on the part of Government, removes the most important check upon expenditure, and dispenses

with the necessity of seeking for an equality between income and expenditure in economy.

1842.

51. Continued.

"The actual state of the revenue, exhibiting a deficiency of £7,500,000 in five years, and a certain deficiency of £2,500,000 more in this year, besides probable demands from our Eastern war, may perhaps justify the imposition of an income-tax as a temporary burden, especially after the attempt to add a twentieth part to the excise and customs had only produced an increase of a two-hundredth part; yet it behoves Parliament, as the faithful guardians of the people's rights and interests, to take care that, during its temporary existence, its pressure shall be distributed in such a manner as shall make it most easily and patiently borne. In this case, it is indispensable that there should be no exemptions, not even of the highest and most exalted in the realm, of a due sense of which the Sovereign has afforded a shining example, in voluntarily offering to share the burden with the meanest of her subjects. But this alone is not enough. It is indispensable also that some distinction should be established between incomes derived from capital of any description and from mere labour, whether that labour be of the head or the hands, by levying a smaller proportion on the latter income than the former. For the same reason, it is indispensable, if we would avoid making the tax a direct confiscation, to make the rate different on persons living on annuities, salaries, and life-interests only, and those who are possessed, in addition, of the capital or stock from which it proceeds.

52. Continued.

"These are the exemptions or limitations which justice absolutely requires if this tax is for any period, however short, to be persevered in. There are others more likely to be earnestly contended for, which are not founded in justice, and should be resisted. There should be no distinction of persons in the civil service of the State or in receipt of pensions; they should be dealt with as belong-

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

ing to the class of annuitants only. It is as little consistent with justice or sound policy to make the rate heavier upon persons of larger income than smaller, or to exempt any class from its operation, until you arrive at the class where it is not worth the expense of collecting, or the people are wholly unable to pay it. Unless this is done, not only is the tax a direct partial confiscation, by seizing upon the property of one class while others are exempt from it, but there is the greatest risk that it will degenerate into a perpetual burden, which all other classes, excepting the one burdened, have a direct interest, for their own benefit, in retaining upon them. The only way to make the tax temporary only, is to subject such a number of persons to its operation as to interest at all times a majority of the constituencies in its abolition.

53. Continued.

"The tax was originally laid on as a war-tax only, and has never been attempted to be justified on any other footing. The very act which extended it to 10 per cent expressly declared that it 'should continue in force during the present war, and until the 6th day of April next after the ratification of a definitive treaty of peace, *and no longer*.' Words cannot be more explicit—the faith of Government cannot be more strongly pledged. Accordingly, by a great effort of the nation, it was shaken off in 1816, though Lord Castlereagh and the Government of the day made the greatest efforts to get it continued for at least a year longer, in order to wind up the expense of the gigantic war then terminated. But what is the present proposal of the Minister? It is to impose it during a period of profound peace, when, as the speech from the Throne has just informed us, her Majesty continues to receive assurances of the most friendly dispositions from all foreign powers. To resort to the desperate measure of an income-tax, in such circumstances, is nothing less than to proclaim to the world that your resources are exhausted, that indirect taxation has reached its limits, and that you are now more straitened in your

finances, in the end of a peace of twenty-five years' duration, than you formerly were in the middle of a war of nearly as long duration.

54. Concluded.

"When Mr Pitt imposed the tax, it was to meet a deficit of £10,000,000, in the heat of a great war, which there was absolutely no other means of filling up. Is there any analogy between such a situation and the present one of this country? Your deficit is £2,500,000, about a twentieth part of your whole income. Though there has been a deficiency for some years, yet the resources of the country are unimpaired. During that time, the credit of the nation has been so high, that the Three per Cents have been at 89 and 90, and you have been able to borrow at 3½ per cent, while other nations have been obliged to give 5.* There is therefore nothing in the state of public credit which requires an extraordinary effort—nothing which obliges you to contradict the assertion of former Parliaments, and the declarations of all classes of politicians, that this is a tax that ought to be reserved either for times of war or difficulties with great powers, in times of peace making them equal to times of war.[1] The budget of last year will furnish funds adequate to the whole public necessities, without recurring to this odious, unjust, and inquisitorial tax, which should be

[1] Parl. Deb. lxii. 86, 147; Ann. Reg. 1842, 77, 79.

* Sir R. Peel made a happy retort on this allusion to the high state of the Funds, as affording the means of meeting the public necessities without recurring to an income-tax. "If you say it is better to go on a little longer with the present system, increasing the debt a little more, funding at 91, why are the Three per Cents at 91? Who has made them 91? Public credit is high; the Funds have risen, and, say you, 'You can have a loan easily now.' Oh you miserable financiers!—(Laughter and cheers.) The Funds are high, because you have shown a disposition not to resort to loans in times of peace."—*Parl. Deb.* lii. 444.

In this debate, Sir R. Peel stated the deficiency at—

United Kingdom, ...	£2,570,000
India, ...	2,430,000
Total,	£5,000,000

while the surplus the Whigs received on entering upon office was £3,000,000. —*Ann. Reg.* 1842, p. 89.

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

reserved as a last resource for the country in periods of extreme peril and difficulty."

55. The bill passes, and its reception by the country.

Lord John Russell's amendment was rejected, on the 13th April, by a majority of 308 to 202, and on the 30th May the third reading was carried by a majority of 130. In the Lords, the bill passed by a majority of 71. Notwithstanding these large majorities in both Houses, however, the change introduced great alarm into the country, especially the grazing districts, which were most threatened by the changes in the tariff. The admission of horned cattle at a duty of £1 a-head, and sheep, pigs, and salted meat at very reduced duties, naturally excited great alarm among the agriculturists, who were well aware that these animals were reared in countries where rent and wages were not a half of what they are in the British Islands. The oxen of Holstein, and the dairy produce of Holland, were particularly dreaded, and appearances for some time seemed to justify the apprehension. Butcher-meat from Hamburg was advertised at threepence a-pound; beef and mutton fell a third in the London market; and during the panic, great numbers of graziers sold off their whole stock, in the belief that the country would be wholly supplied from foreign parts. By degrees, however, the alarm subsided; people recollected that it takes a year to make a sheep, three to form an ox; and the immediate rise of prices which ensued in the countries from which importation was chiefly dreaded, proved that the competition was not likely to be so formidable as had been apprehended. Meat, after a great fall, soon rose again to its former level of 6d. and 7d. a-pound; and the subsequent importation, though by no means inconsiderable, has not been so large as to warrant any well-grounded apprehensions that *this branch* of British agriculture is likely to suffer materially from the change. On the contrary, the evident tendency of the new tariff has been to cause the corn-lands to be thrown into grass, and render the nation dependent on foreigners,

not for its meat, but for its bread. This is exactly what took place in the last days of the Roman Empire, when Italian agriculture was destroyed by the free importation of wheat from Egypt and Libya; but the Italian landlords still drew considerable rents from vast herds of cattle which wandered over the Ausonian plains, of which the present desolate Campagna is a remnant and an example.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxii. 444, 710; Mart. ii. 541.

56. Reflections on the Tariff, and reasons for it.

Impartial consideration, now that their effect has been tested by experience, must lead to the conclusion that these changes on the tariff introduced by Sir R. Peel were expedient, and required by the circumstances of society. The reason is one of convincing force, though, of course, it was not alluded to by Sir R. Peel or any of his party, or indeed on either side of the House. This is, that as the price of every article of consumption had on an average been lowered at least 50 per cent by the contraction of the currency, it was essential that the money duties should be reduced at least in a similar proportion, or the burden of the import duties would be, practically seriously augmented. To have done justice to the nation, taxation of every sort should have been reduced in a similar proportion, including that which went to provide for the interest of the National Debt; but as this was impossible, it was at least something to reduce the money duties on imported articles, and thereby lower their cost in proportion to the lessened income of those who were to purchase them. It is true, this was hard on them who lived by the production of such articles, and this at first sight seemed an injustice; but in reality it was not so. The price of labour, and of raw materials of all sorts, having been reduced also 50 per cent by the monetary changes, the cost of production was lessened to them in the same proportion. and the expense of their own living had been reduced in a similar degree. Sir R. Peel said that the income-tax of 3 per cent would be more than compensated to every person who paid it by the lessened price of every article of consumption occasioned by his tariff; and although

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

there are few of the payers of the tax who will concur in that opinion, yet none can deny that a reduction of at least 50 per cent in the cost of living had been made by the monetary changes that he had introduced, which imperatively called for a corresponding reduction in the burdens with which their articles of consumption were affected.

57. It might have been easily obviated by an extension of the Currency.

This leads to a very curious reflection. The financial situation of the nation had become so serious, and the deficit so alarming, that it had overturned one Administration, and forced an entire change of commercial policy on another. The nation was steeped in misery, and indirect taxation had reached its limits; yet foreign affairs had become so threatening that a great increase of the national armaments had become indispensable. The whole experience and talent of the Legislature were taxed to the uttermost to discover a remedy for these manifold evils, and none could be thought of but recurring, in a period of profound European peace, to the grinding tax heretofore reserved as a last resource for the exigencies and dangers of war. Yet was the remedy easy, cheap, certain, injurious to no one, profitable to all. Nothing was required but to send a letter from the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governors of the Bank of England, authorising the notes issued on securities to be raised from £14,000,000 to £21,000,000. Instantly despondency would have been succeeded by hope, poverty by comfort, compulsory idleness by willing industry, financial embarrassment by an overflowing treasury. Nothing but to confess a gigantic error was awanting to repair boundless calamities, to restore happiness to a suffering realm. But to have done so required, in some, the magnanimous confession of former mistakes; in others, a surrender of, to them, a most profitable usurpation; in all, a close attention to a subject of universal interest, and but very partial comprehension. The proof of this,

however, is now decisive. Sir Robert Peel's subsequent change in 1844, without his designing it, induced such an extension of the currency as was required, though on the most perilous footing, and two years of prosperity, followed by a frightful commercial crisis, ensued. Nature gave a lasting extension on a solid foundation, by opening her reserves of gold in 1851, and unbroken prosperity has been the consequence.

58. The income-tax was justifiable.

For the same reason the income-tax must be regarded, generally speaking, as a wise and just measure at the time it was imposed. The necessity for it was as great as when first proposed by Mr Pitt; and the wars in Affghanistan and China, if less dangerous, were hardly less costly than those which had been waged with European potentates. The currency system had all turned to the advantage of realised property; the *Times*, the great advocate for that system, boasted in the pride of its heart that it had made a sovereign worth two sovereigns. This, though a little exaggerated, was in the main true; but as the monied interest had thus largely benefited by a system under which every other interest had essentially suffered, nothing could be more just than that it should bear the burden of the increased taxation, which that very system had rendered irrecoverable from all the other classes of the community. In a word, the monetary system was a class system of legislation designed for the benefit of the rich, and which had ended in ruining the poor; and it had now led to its natural and just result, that of rendering class taxation unavoidable if the public revenue was to be upheld and national bankruptcy averted.

59. But this made the tax on perishable incomes more unjust.

But for the very same reason, the injustice of levying the tax at the same rate upon the wages of labour or the income of annuitants, as upon incomes derived from land or realised capital, was not merely to oppress industry by taxing a perishable at the same rate as a durable income, but to subject it to the still farther

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

injustice of making *the sufferers under class legislation pay at the same rate as those enriched by it*—those whose incomes had been halved, as those which had been doubled by recent changes. The injustice of the double burden thus imposed upon the industrious classes was so obvious, that, had it been widespread, it must have been speedily abrogated. But it was not widespread, and therefore it was continued, and still continues. The whole persons assessed under Schedule D—that is, the professional class in Great Britain—were only 143,000, a mere trifle among 27,000,000, then forming the population of the British Islands. This handful of men were not the rich bankers or capitalists whose voice is always listened to with respect by Government; they were for the most part hard-working citizens, too few to inspire terror by their numbers, too poor to command influence by their riches.

60. Reasons of this injustice being committed.

The vast majority who escaped the tax because their incomes were below the line when it began, gave themselves no sort of disquiet about an injustice by which they were not affected, and rather rejoiced at a burden on others which might be the means of cheapening commodities; the holders of realised wealth in secret beheld with satisfaction the burden imposed in such a manner upon the industrious classes as might lessen its pressure on themselves. Thus crushed by the weight of capital, the industrious classes remained oppressed with an injustice which probably never would have been thought of but in a country subjected to class government, nor continued but in one ruled by its influences. The Ministers, assailed by arguments to which they could make no reply, contented themselves with observing that the whole income-tax was an injustice, but that such were the practical difficulties involved in the question that they could not see their way to a more equitable distribution of its burden;—the usual answer when Government is pressed with a request which they cannot assign any reason for not granting, but which

they are resolved, for some undivulged reason, not to concede. It is remarkable that, while this injustice has been perpetrated and continued for fifteen years, in a country boasting all the blessings of representative institutions, in despotic Denmark the property-tax has been arranged in so different a manner, that the only question is whether it is not unduly favourable to the middle and industrious classes.*

61. Peel's heroic conduct on the Affghanistan disaster.

If Sir R. Peel was sincere in his appeal to the holders of property to submit to a temporary burden in order to extricate the nation from the financial embarrassments in which it had become involved, he himself gave the noblest proof that he was prepared to act upon the principles which he recommended to others. On the very night (11th March) when he pronounced that eloquent appeal, he had received the accounts of the death of Sir W. Macnaghten, and the Affghanistan disaster. Veiling with heroic courage his knowledge of the calamity under a calm exterior and a serene visage, he addressed the assembly as if nothing had occurred to break the even tenor of his way, instead of intelligence having been received of the greatest disaster in British annals. The mournful events, however, could not long be concealed, and such was the anxiety of the public for information as to their details, that almost every night, for some weeks after, he was besieged with questions in the House from persons who had relatives involved in the frightful ruin. To all these questions he answered with the kindness of a father, and the resignation of a Christian; and when the moment for decision arrived, and he required openly to face the calamity and adopt measures to

* "In Denmark the property-tax is on a graduated scale in proportion to the amount of the income enjoyed by the persons taxed, from whatever source derived. It may well be doubted whether this is not confiscation of the fortunes above the line where the heavier burden begins. But the curious thing is, that in the popular community the injustice perpetrated was on the middle class; in the despotic monarchy on the nobility and rich."—DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, ii. 347.

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

meet it, he acted with the consistency of an old Roman. He openly admitted the magnitude of the disaster which had been sustained, but stated that Government were resolved to meet it in a worthy spirit, and that every effort would be made to restore victory to the British standards. This intrepid announcement was received with loud cheers from both sides of the House; reinforcements to a large extent were sent out to the armies in India, so as to raise the British forces there to 45,000 men; and Europe, after a disaster had been sustained, which it was generally supposed, and perhaps hoped, had finally destroyed the British power in India, beheld with astonishment preparations making to elevate it to an unprecedented pitch of grandeur.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxii. 83, 307.

62. Lord Mahon's Copyright Bill.

Almost unnoticed amidst the multitude of important objects which in this session crowd upon the attention, a bill was brought forward, calculated in the end to work a great and durable change on the national mind and fortunes. This was the COPYRIGHT BILL, brought forward by Lord Mahon (now Earl Stanhope), which this year was sanctioned by both Houses, and passed into law. The right of authors to the property of the written expression of their thoughts, not recognised by the common law of England when published, was the creature of statute, and by the celebrated Act of Queen Anne had been limited to fourteen years, with the addition of fourteen more if the author survived the first. This strange distinction, which in the case of works of standard merit likely to be prized by posterity, and therefore valuable to the author's family, made so great a difference in the advantages accruing to them according as he survived or did not survive a certain arbitrary time, had long been felt as unjust. It had not escaped observation, too, that the effect of limiting the copyright of authors to so short a period, had been to direct original thought and genius to works of transient popularity rather than durable utility. Impressed with these ideas, the accomplished Mr Serjeant

Act 1710.

Talfourd had made repeated attempts to obtain for authors a further extension of the duration of copyright, and the example of Sir Walter Scott's family, which was immersed in difficulties at a time when his literary works should have yielded a splendid fortune to his descendants, was strongly founded on. The learned Serjeant's efforts, however, which were continued through three successive sessions, were unsuccessful, chiefly through the efforts of Mr Macaulay, who, strange to say, strained every nerve to defeat a measure calculated to give independence to a class of which he himself was so bright an ornament. At length, in this session, the tardy act of justice was done to literary men, and by Lord Mahon's bill the copyright was fixed at the entire life of the author, and seven years after; or if these terms did not extend to so much, at all events to forty-two years.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lx. 1429, lxi. 1397; Pol. Dict. i. 641.

63. Reflections on this Act.

There can be no doubt that this was a very important step in the right direction, and far more for the interests of nations than those of literary men: the beneficial effects of the change are already apparent, and are becoming more so every day. The extension of the power of reading to the great body of the people, and the great increase which has consequently taken place in the sale of publications, has indeed put an end to the degrading patronage of rank and power to genius which was felt as so painful by the authors in the time of Queen Anne, and appears so strongly in the fulsome flattery of their dedications. The public has become the great patron, and superseded all others. But the change has only enhanced the dangers to which philosophic thought and literary effort are exposed. The public is a jealous mistress, and very little experience is required to show that incessant flattery is the best passport to her favours. The servility of the press to the reigning multitude in democratic communities, is at least equal to all that ever was shown to powerful ministers or charming duchesses;—witness the press of republican France in former

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

days, of republican America, and a large part of it in this country in these times.

64. Extension of the dangers of literature.

This evil is of the most serious kind, and it is constantly increasing with the extension of education, and the augmentation of the number of readers; for that only multiplies the numbers to whom the flattering unction must be applied. "No man," says Goethe, "ever spoke for half an hour to a mixed audience without flattering them, that he was not thought tedious." This is not less true of writers than speakers. "Democracy," says Guizot, "has two grave faults; it aspires passionately to rule without control, and it is constantly governed by *the interests and passions of the moment.* To judge by the experience of the past, it is of all the social powers the most exacting and unforeseeing—that which is most jealous of limits or division of power, and also that which is most exclusively governed by present fancies, without a thought either of the past or the future."[1] The only way in which it is possible to prevent literature from falling in with and aggravating this perilous tendency in numerous and highly-educated communities, is to give authors *an interest in the approbation of future times,* and thereby emancipate them from the dominion of the present. Unless this is done, the standard literature of the country, like the daily or monthly press, will be entirely devoted to inflaming the passions and aggravating the prejudices of the moment. Truth is always distasteful in the outset of its career to the majority: witness the reception of the discovery of the motions of the earth by Galileo, of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, of the system of the heavens by Copernicus and Newton. The Cross itself, which was to save the world, was borne in pain and sorrow by our Saviour: "Crucify him! crucify him!" was the universal cry. So different is the first impulse of the multitude from the ultimate conclusions of reason. No state of things can be conceived more perilous; and if it is of long

[1] Guizot, Sir R. Peel, 353.

continuance, it may come to give awful meaning to the banishment of mankind from paradise in consequence of eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. But as certainly as prejudice and passion govern mankind in regard to the present, so reason and truth prevail in the end. "Magna est veritas et prævalebit" is a maxim of universal truth and application; and the only way to prevent it, to rule in the end the thoughts of men, is to give authors a durable interest in the publication of their thoughts, and thereby relieve them from the necessity of flattering only present passions or interests.

65. The Temperance Movement in Ireland.

In January 1841, Mr O'Connell said at a meeting of the Repeal Association in Ireland, "I shall for my part vote for the Whigs to keep them in; but I tell them honestly and firmly they have lost altogether the hearts of the Irish people, and nothing but the LOUD CRY FOR REPEAL shall henceforth be heard among us. I did not resume the repeal agitation till I saw how utterly unable the Whigs were to effect anything." The first step in this movement was to collect money, the sinews of war, and this was done in a very curious way, highly characteristic of the ascendant which O'Connell and the priesthood had acquired over the entire Catholic population. The sum paid in Ireland for ardent spirits, not less than from £4,000,000 to £5,000,000 annually, presented a fund of vast amount, and perfectly equal to the necessities of the case, if any considerable part of it could be realised. Great as was the influence of the Agitator with his countrymen, however, this was effected to a most surprising degree by supplanting one passion by another—the desire for drink by the thirst for independence. To divert the funds hitherto wasted in the public-house into the coffers of the Repeal Association was the great object, and this was done by a movement veiled under the guise of philanthropy, which for a time was attended with surprising success. The *temperance* movement began. Father Mathew, a monk of ardent

CHAP. XLI.

1842.

disposition, nervous eloquence, and enthusiastic philanthropy, was the soul of the movement. The benevolent ecclesiastic was the unsuspecting hand by which the Catholic hierarchy carried on their projects of converting the surplus funds of Irish labour to the purposes of repeal agitation. The effect of his heart-stirring eloquence was at first prodigious; it recalled the days when Peter the Hermit roused the dormant energies of Europe in behalf of the Holy Land. Multitudes rushed forward everywhere to take the temperance pledge from the hands of the great apostle of sobriety. Fifty thousand met him here, forty thousand there; his journeys resembled rather the progress of a mighty conqueror than the movements of a humble priest bent only on an errand of mercy. Such was the enthusiasm excited, so general the transports, that the consumption of spirits in Ireland fell off in one year from 10,000,000 to 3,000,000 gallons, and no small part of the embarrassment of the English treasury arose from the sudden temperance of the people of Ireland.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 296, 297; Hall's Ireland, ii. 36, iii. 60; Ann. Reg. 1839, 248, Chron.

66. Progress and decline of the movement.

It has often been remarked, that whenever the people give over *fighting at fairs* in Ireland, you may be sure that some serious outbreak is in contemplation, and Government will do well to stand on their guard. Never was this truth more clearly demonstrated than on the present occasion. The effect of the taking of the temperance pledge by two millions of men in the first instance was immense. Serious crime rapidly diminished, as it will always do when by any means a check is given, even for a time, to the dreadful passion for ardent spirits. The judges everywhere congratulated the grand juries on the lightness of the calendar; predial outrages declined, and the philanthropic and inexperienced began to indulge the pleasing hope that, by the zeal of a benevolent friar, an antidote had at length been discovered for the most demoralising social corruption of civilised man. It must be confessed that the returns of crime in Ireland for some years seemed to justify the anticipation. Convictions decreased

from 12,000 in 1839 to 8000 in 1844.* But all these movements, originating in sudden conversion, not lasting changes of habit, are merely temporary in their operation, and not unfrequently are followed by a reaction which renders matters worse than they had been before the change commenced. When the political and sacerdotal objects for which the movement had been set on foot had ceased, and the repeal agitation had failed, the temperance movement came to an end, and was succeeded by the darkest era ever known of Irish suffering and crime. The reaction in favour of whisky became as strong as the movement in favour of temperance ever had been. The annual consumption of spirits rose again to 12,000,000 gallons, and with it, aided by the terrible calamities of 1846 and 1847, swelled the rolls of crime to an unprecedented amount.[1] †

[1] Mart. ii. 296, 297; Porter, 668; Ann. Reg. 1840, 624.

67. Commencement of the Repeal agitation.

It soon appeared to what purpose the large funds rendered available by the temperance movement, while it lasted, were to be turned by the Irish agitators. No sooner did it appear that the fate of the Whigs was sealed, and that Sir Robert Peel was to succeed to the helm, than his support of the Government ceased, and O'Connell commenced a *guerre à mort* against England and everything belonging to it. His first move was to endeavour to exclude English manufactures from the country; but that attempt soon failed among a people for the most

Years.	Committed in Ireland.	Convicted.
* 1839,	26,392	12,049
1840,	23,833	11,194
1841,	20,796	9,287
1842,	21,186	9,874
1843,	20,126	8,620
1844,	19,446	8,042
1845,	16,696	7,101

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 668.

Years.	Committed in Ireland.	Convicted.
† 1846,	18,492	8,639
1847,	31,209	15,233
1848,	38,528	18,206
1849,	41,489	21,202

—PORTER, 668.

CHAP. XLI. 1842.

part possessing no manufactures, and invariably so poor as the Irish. His next step was a well-devised one, and was attended with important consequences. He converted the Precursors' Association into a new one styled the REPEAL ASSOCIATION; and thenceforward his whole efforts were directed to further its objects. The organisation of the Association was the same as that which had proved so successful in bringing about Catholic emancipation. It consisted of associates, members, and volunteers. A card was given to each person entering, which served the purpose of mutual recognition without expressly violating the law against pass-words and signs. Each of these associates paid 1s. on entering and getting his ticket. The next class was the members, and they paid £1 each on entering, or engaged to obtain twenty associates at 1s. each. The members received each a card, on which were inscribed prints of four of the principal places where the Irish had been successful in combating either the English or the Danes. At the top of the card was a roll or script, on which were inscribed the words, "Resolved unanimously that the claims of any body of men, other than the King, Lords, and Commons of *Ireland*, to make laws to bind this kingdom, are unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance.—DUNGANNON VOLUNTEERS, 15*th February* 1782." The Association was governed by general inspectors, repeal wardens, and collectors; and it was their duty to collect the subscriptions for the repeal cause, and transmit them to the central Association in Dublin, where they formed a fund which soon became so celebrated under the name of *the Rent*. With such zeal did the wardens and collectors discharge their duties, that the rent ere long reached £3000 a-week; and O'Connell boasted, in the pride of his heart, that he had two millions of repealers under his banners![1]

[1] Spectator, 1841, 28, 29, 272, 344, 466; Ann. Reg. 1843, 225, 226; Mart. ii. 562, 563.

The plan of operations concocted between this consummate master of the art of agitation and his confederate chiefs, was, not to break out into open rebellion, but to

68. Monster meetings.

approach it as closely as possible, and intimidate Government by the display of numbers. For this purpose, meetings on a gigantic scale were to be held in all parts of the country where they were likely to be successful, to which the people were to be collected by the wardens, priests, and collectors in the different parishes. The temperance chiefs were, for the most part, enrolled in this ulterior movement; and the detachments from the different parishes generally mustered, preceded by the temperance bands. When Sir R. Peel's return to power in May 1841 was evident, simultaneous meetings were held in every parish of Ireland, to implore the Queen "not to receive into her confidence the bitter and malignant enemies of her faithful Irish people." The people came in companies, led by their priests, and preceded by the temperance bands, often a distance of ten or fifteen miles, and marched back the same day. The enthusiasm thus excited was indescribable; all hearts were stirred, all understandings swept away by it. A bed-ridden old woman was carried ten miles "to seek salvation for her country." The numbers collected on these occasions, though much exaggerated by the repeal press, were undoubtedly immense. At a meeting on the Hill of Kilnoe, in the county of Clare, in May 1841, it was said that 100,000, and probably really 50,000 were present. These meetings, which were generally addressed by O'Connell in person, were held through the whole of 1841, and though intermitted in 1842, from a doubt whether Sir R. Peel's Ministry would not be swept away, and the Liberal Government restored by the Anti-Corn-Law agitation, yet they were renewed with fresh vigour in 1843, and soon acquired the most formidable consistency.[1]

[1] Spectator, 1841, 466, 582; Ann. Reg. 1843, 226, 227; Mart. ii. 563.

69. Character of these meetings, and language used at them.

As these meetings generally consisted of thirty, forty, or fifty thousand persons, it may readily be believed that it was impossible that any voice, how powerful soever, could be heard by such prodigious multitudes. But this difficulty, apparently insurmountable, was got over by a

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

very simple device. A number of wardens were stationed in concentric circles round the hustings from which O'Connell addressed them, and they repeated what he said with stentorian lungs, until the re-echo reached the farthest extremity of the crowd, and next morning the whole speech was published by the newspapers. The character of his addresses may be judged of by the following extract from a speech delivered at Trim, on March 15, 1843: "When I think of the multitudes that surround me; when I see the bright eye and hardy look which belong to Irishmen beyond any people upon earth, I ask you, 'Will you be slaves?' You will answer, 'No;' and I reply, 'I shall either be in my grave or a freeman.' You can expect nothing from the English Parliament: idle sentiments will not now do: I call on you to act at once: make your choice either to be freemen or slaves.

'Hereditary bondsmen, know ye not,
Who would be free, himself must strike the blow?'"

Aug. 15.

And at an immense meeting held at Tara, so famous in Irish song, on 15th August 1843, he said, amidst thunders of applause: "I was laughed at in January because I said this would be the repeal year: does any one laugh now? It is my turn now to make merry. I am now able positively to announce to you that before twelve months are over, a Parliament will be held in College Green, Dublin, and the hurrahs for repeal will be heard over all the land. The Duke of Wellington began by threatening us: he does not talk of this now; he is getting loopholes made in the old barracks; he is preparing to stand a siege—as if we were going to break our heads against stone walls! The Queen will call the Parliament: we will march to College Green with law and order inscribed on our banners. I shall have all the teetotallers with me: they are the finest effluence of human wishes: there is not an army in the world that I would not fight with them." And the unanimous adhesion of the clergy to

the repeal movement was declared by the Rev. Dr Higgins, the Roman Catholic bishop of Armagh, who said at a dinner held at Mullingar, on *Sunday*, 14th May 1843—"I formally announce to you that *all the bishops of Ireland have formally declared themselves repealers*, and that from shore to shore we are all such. (Immense applause.) I defy all the ministers of England to put down the agitation in the county of Armagh. If they beset our temples, and mix our people with spies, we will prepare our people for the circumstances; and if they bring us for that to the scaffold, in dying in behalf of our country, we will bequeath our wrongs to our successors. (Enthusiastic cheers.)"[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1843, 228, 229, 231; Mart. ii. 366, 367; Spectator, 1843, 800, 801.

70. Measures of Government, and Arms Bill. Aug. 22.

While meetings attended by forty and fifty thousand persons were almost weekly addressed by inflammatory addresses of this description, and the peasantry, instead of attending to their business, neglected the land, and were hurrying from one crowded meeting to another, Government looked on with apparently supine indifference, and even seemed to favour the agitation. Large bodies of police and military were always in attendance, but out of sight of the assembled crowds, so as to avoid any collision with the people. No prosecutions were instituted either against the orators who spoke treason, or the newspapers which printed it. One indication of vigour alone was given by Government, which was the carrying of an "Arms Act," whereby it was rendered necessary for the possessors of arms to have them registered, branded by an officer appointed for the purpose, and a small license taken out for them. It was evident that this measure was absolutely necessary for the preservation of life and property in Ireland, and it did not differ materially from the bill introduced by Lord Morpeth in 1838; but nevertheless it was made the subject of violent party conflict in the House, and was opposed by the whole strength of the united Liberal and Catholic parties. Introduced on the 29th May, it was so obstinately resisted that it did not get through the Commons till the 9th August; but it went

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

rapidly through the Lords, and became law at the very end of the session, on the 22d of the same month. But meanwhile, under the skilful directions of the Duke of Wellington, preparations were making in every direction for a serious conflict. The smaller posts were generally abandoned, and the troops concentrated in the larger ones, which were barricaded and loopholed, and every preparation made for a vigorous defence against the attacks which were hourly apprehended.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxi. 470; Ann. Reg. 1843, 248, 250.

71. The Clontarf meeting is stopped, and O'Connell arrested. Oct. 8.

The reason why the Government, to the surprise of all Europe, remained so long quiescent under the tremendous agitation which was now in every quarter convulsing Ireland, was, that they were desirous not to strike till they had a fair prospect of a conviction of the leaders of the movement—an event which, with the English law requiring unanimity in juries, and the divided state of the country, was by no means probable. Canada had recently afforded a memorable example of the embarrassment arising from an accumulation of prisoners whose guilt was evident, but whom no jury would convict. At length, however, Sir R. Peel deemed the moment for action had arrived, and the blow struck was decisive. The repealers, relying on their long impunity, had now almost thrown off the mask, and talked openly of their "repeal cavalry and infantry," of marching and countermarching. The language constantly used was now, "Repeal or Blood;" and the crowds swore to "live or die for O'Connell." Preparations were making for a monster meeting on the greatest scale at Clontarf, when a proclamation was suddenly issued by the Lord-Lieutenant forbidding the meeting, and calling upon all well-disposed persons to abstain from attending it. The proposed place of meeting was occupied at daylight by large bodies of cavalry and infantry, which were strongly supported by reserves in Dublin; the guns of the Pigeon-house Fort were turned on the road leading from Dublin to Clontarf; the hustings were removed; all persons coming to the meeting turned back; and six thousand men in all assem-

bled to support the majesty of the law. The Repeal Association immediately yielded. Parties were sent out in all directions to warn away and disperse the people, and the meeting was stopped. This was followed by the arrest of O'Connell and the leaders of the Repeal Association, which took place a few days after, on a charge of conspiracy, sedition, and unlawful assembling.[1]

1844. Oct. 14.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1843, 229, 237; Spectator, 1843, 965.

72. Trial and conviction of O'Connell. Jan. 15, 1844.

The trials came on in the beginning of November, and every effort was made from the very first to obstruct the proceedings by every legal means, and to strain every nerve to intimidate and overawe both the grand and petty jury. Objections were made at every step to the proceedings; and with such success were the efforts of the repealers attended, that a great proportion of the jurymen paid the fine of £50 to avoid serving. At length the objections in point of form were overruled, and the petty jury was sworn. O'Connell came to the bar in the lord mayor's carriage, followed by twenty-three other carriages filled with his friends. The opening speech of the Attorney-General was very powerful, and made a great impression, unfolding as it did a series of proceedings which recalled the Rebellion of 1798, and left no doubt on any one's mind that a crisis of the same description was at hand. The public anxiety rose to the highest pitch as the proceedings drew to their close; but no words can describe the sensation which was felt when the foreman of the jury returned with a verdict finding all the accused guilty of some of the counts in the indictment. A yell arose in the court, which was re-echoed through all the streets and lanes adjoining, when the verdict was known, which froze every heart with horror. Mr Smith O'Brien, a gentleman of family and fortune, who afterwards obtained an unenvied celebrity in Ireland, generously came in with O'Connell when he was to hear judgment; a courageous step at such a moment, which deservedly excited the enthusiasm of all present. Sentence was not pronounced till the 30th

CHAP. XLI.

1844. May 30.

May, and by it O'Connell was ordered to a year's imprisonment, to pay a fine of £2000, and to find security under heavy recognisances to keep the peace for seven years to come. The other persons accused were fined £50 each, and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. Mr O'Connell was allowed to choose his own place of confinement, and he selected the Richmond penitentiary, to which he was immediately conveyed. The judge (Burton) who pronounced sentence was so much affected that he could scarcely discharge his duty.[1]

1 Ann. Reg. 1843, 238, 239—1844, 337; Law Cases, Spectator, 1844, 154: Mart. ii. 572.

73. Reversal of the sentence.

The news of O'Connell's conviction spread like wild-fire over Ireland, and produced a prodigious sensation. Bale-fires were lighted up on all the hills, and there was at first some talk of a general rising; but this was forbidden by O'Connell, who issued a proclamation enjoining the people to keep the peace for six or at most twelve months, and they would have a parliament in College Green. He was permitted to see his friends in confinement, but not to receive deputations; and it was soon apparent that his power had received a death-blow. His alleged invincibility was at an end; the determination of Government at length to terminate the agitation, and strike at the guilty party, had been made manifest; and after so flagrant a proof of the erroneous nature of his predictions regarding himself, men no longer trusted those of which he was so profuse regarding his country. Sunday, 7th July, was appointed as a day for a general prayer in all the Catholic chapels of Ireland in behalf of O'Connell; but there was an ominous difference among the spiritual authorities regarding it. The Archbishop of Dublin interdicted the prayer in his province, and it was only partially obeyed in the rest of Ireland. Meanwhile an appeal against the sentence was presented first to the Queen's Bench in Ireland, and next to the House of Peers in England. The sentence was affirmed by the former, but the issue was different with the latter. The

case was referred, according to usual custom, to the twelve judges for their opinion; and though they were unanimous in pronouncing the findings of the jury on six out of the eleven counts in the indictment to be bad from not returning a correct answer to the charges, yet, by a majority of seven to two, they held that enough which was unobjectionable remained in the verdict to sustain the sentence. With this opinion in favour of the conviction, the case returned to the House of Peers, and then the result was different. The lay lords, with great propriety, abstained from voting, and the case was left to the law lords. These were Lord-Chancellor Lyndhurst, Lords Denman, Cottenham, Campbell, and Brougham. Three of them overruled the opinion of the twelve judges, and held the objections insurmountable; two—Lords Lyndhurst and Brougham—adhered to the opinion of the majority of the judges. The result was, that the sentence was quashed, and the accused all set at liberty.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 337; Law Cases; Spectator, 1844, 841, 845.

74. Effects of this decision.

Leaving it to English lawyers to determine in point of law between these conflicting authorities, and to say whether the opinion of Lords Lyndhurst and Brougham, and the seven English judges, or that of the three Whig law lords and the two judges be the better founded, one thing is perfectly clear, that never was a more magnificent exhibition of British justice exhibited than on this occasion, and never a step taken attended with more beneficial effect in stilling the agitation of the neighbouring country. O'Connell was now at the mercy of the assembly he had so long vilified and reviled; nothing was required but for three of the numerous peers who were in attendance behind the Woolsack awaiting the issue to step forward and take a part in the vote, and the thing was done. They did not do so; they yielded to the scruples, perhaps too critically conceived, of the three law lords, and allowed the great Agitator to issue, apparently, a triumphant

CHAP. XLI.

1844.

martyr from prison, rather than violate, even in the most trifling matters of form, the strictest principles of British justice. Every one saw that O'Connell was really guilty—that he owed his liberation to a minute technical difficulty; but this difficulty was given effect to by the highest Saxon court, composed almost entirely of political opponents, upon whom he had heaped every epithet of abuse which the English language could afford. The moral effect of this was great. If the victory in legal niceties was with O'Connell, that in opinion and justice was with the House of Peers; and he never afterwards regained his position in public estimation, for he had been caught in his own toils, and liberated from them by the hand of his enemies.

75. His subsequent career and death. May 15, 1847.

His subsequent career was short, and deserves to be noticed only as the closing scene in the life of one who had so long held so prominent a position in the public eye. He was indulged with a triumphal procession from jail when the reversal of the sentence was communicated to him, and an immense crowd assembled to witness his departure and attend him home; but it was already evident that his influence was on the wane. The year of liberation passed without a parliament being assembled in College Green—and the next, and the next. Men began to throw in his teeth the non-accomplishment of his promises; the credulity even of the Irish peasantry began to yield to the repeated disappointment of their hopes. He was never formidable again; and he had the misfortune, before he died, of seeing himself passed in the career of popularity by younger, more audacious, and less experienced men. "Young Ireland" reproached him with having "surrendered," when, on the return of the "base, bloody, and brutal Whigs" to power in 1846, he was reinstated in the commission of the peace, and supported the Russell Ministry in Parliament. Symptoms of internal disease and approaching dissolution ere long

appeared. His eye became heavy, his countenance fell, his step, once so firm and elastic, waxed feeble and tremulous. By the advice of his physicians he went abroad; but he experienced no material benefit from change of scene, or the respect with which he was received by the Catholic authorities; and having reached Genoa, he expired there on 15th May 1847. After his death his reputation rapidly sank, and among none so completely as those who had so long worshipped his footsteps. It was essentially injured in the estimation of the world in general, by the revelations made by the Government commissioners sent down to investigate the condition of Ireland during the famine which so soon after ensued, to the effect that the Liberator who had uttered so many eloquent declamations on the wrongs of Ireland, was himself a grinding middleman, who exacted three times as much from his starving tenantry as he himself paid for the land to his overlord. His reputation sank so rapidly, that at a sale of his effects, which took place in Dublin some years after, a bust of the great Liberator only brought sixpence.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 95, Chron.; Letters of Times' Correspondent, 530; Letters from Genoa, May 16, 1847; Mart. ii. 574, 575.

76. Fine harvest of 1842, and gradual improvement in the country in 1843.

The general distress continued unabated during the first six months of 1843; but towards the close of the year symptoms of decided amendment began to appear. This was probably in some degree owing to the impulse given to trade by Sir R. Peel's tariff, but much more was to be ascribed to the increased bounty of nature, which now began to be as benign as for the five preceding years she had been rigorous. The "long, long summer" of 1842 still lives in the recollection of those who had been warmed by its sunshine, as much as the terrible winters of 1838 and 1839 live in their gloomy remembrance. The autumn of that year was peculiarly fine; during the whole of August and September scarce a drop of rain fell, and the harvest was not only abundant, but, what is of almost equal importance in these

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

northern latitudes, was got in in excellent order. The effect was soon apparent. Never was seen more clearly the dependence of man upon Supreme Power, and the superior efficacy of Divine blessings to all the efforts of man in drying up the springs of public distress. The price of wheat, which in 1841 had been 63s., fell in 1842-43 to 49s.; and the importation of foreign wheat, which in the former year had been 2,403,000 quarters, sunk in the latter to 1,606,000, and in the succeeding one to 476,000 quarters.* The effect of this happy change was great in itself; food was rendered comparatively cheap to the working classes, and the pressure of that terrible combination under which they had so long suffered, of low wages arising from commercial depression, and high prices of grain arising from bad seasons, was sensibly alleviated. But important as these effects were, they yet yielded in importance to the effects of the change on the currency, and through it on the credit and commercial enterprise of the nation. The progressive decline of imports of foreign wheat from nearly 3,000,000 quarters to less than 500,000 yearly, took off the great drain on the coffers of the Bank, which had so long taken place, to pay for it. The stock of bullion proportionally increased, and with it the issue of its notes, and the credit, industry, and prosperity of the country. The bullion in the Bank, which in October 1839 had been as low as £2,546,000, and in 1840 was only £3,900,000, progressively rose with the diminution of imports of grain, till in 1843 it stood at £11,200,000, and in March 1844 was as high as £16,100,000.[1] The notes in circulation underwent a

[1] Report of Committee on Banks of Issue, 1841; Tooke on Prices, iv. 436, 441.

* Prices and Importations of Wheat.

Years.	Quarters.	Price.
1841-2,	2,985,422	63s. 4d.
1842-3,	2,405,217	49s. 4d.
1843-4,	1,606,902	53s. 9d.
1844-5,	476,190	46s. 7d.

—Tooke *On Prices*, iv. 415.

similar increase, having advanced from £15,500,000 in 1840, to £22,000,000 in 1844.*

77. General improvement in the country.

The effects of this marked diminution in the import of grain, and increase in the issue of notes, were very great upon prices, and the trade and industry of the country. Prices, indeed, of all the articles of manufactured produce, did not as yet rise; but imports and exports increased, speculation revived, and that deplorable combination of high prices of food with low rates of manufacturing wages, the inevitable result in bad seasons of a currency dependent on the retention of gold, for the time entirely ceased. The increased imports of cotton and other large materials for manufacture, indicated the augmented activity of the employers; while the great augmentation of the humbler articles of luxury, the consumption of which indicated their well-being, afforded a gratifying proof that prosperity was at length, after a long and dreary interval, descending to the cottages of the poor.† The effect upon the general exports and imports of the kingdom, and the revenue, was visible and striking,

* BULLION IN THE BANK, AND NOTES IN CIRCULATION.

	Bullion.	Notes out.
Jan. 1840, . . .	£4,500,000	£15,500,000
„ 1841, . . .	4,000,000	15,600,000
„ 1842, . . .	5,600,000	16,100,000
„ 1843, . . .	10,600,000	18,600,000
„ 1844, . . .	15,200,000	19,500,000
Feb. 1845, . . .	16,100,000	22,000,000

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 437, 441.

† IMPORTS OF THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES FROM 1839 TO 1844 INCLUSIVE.

Years.	Cotton. lb.	Silk. lb.	Hemp. cwt.	Wool. lb.	Sugar. cwt.	Coffee. lb.	Tobacco. lb.
1839	389,396,000	4,788,738	995,603	57,379,000	4,678,000	41,003,000	35,605,000
1840	592,488,000	4,459,542	684,068	49,436,000	4,035,000	70,271,000	36,680,000
1841	487,992,000	4,734,755	652,165	56,170,000	4,908,000	43,317,000	43,935,000
1842	531,750,000	5,388,100	585,905	45,982,000	4,756,000	41,444,000	39,526,000
1843	673,193,000	4,964,203	735,743	49,243,000	5,020,000	38,942,000	43,775,000
1844	646,111,000	5,899,187	913,233	65,713,000	4,880,075	46,523,000	37,610,000

—TOOKE'S *History of Prices*, iv. 435.

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

especially towards the close of 1843 and during the whole of 1844, when a great increase took place;* and the increase of the revenue, coupled with the produce of the income-tax, which instead of £3,441,000, as Sir R. Peel had calculated, proved to be £5,400,000, exhibited an equally gratifying proof of reviving public prosperity.

78. Parliamentary measures of 1843. Lord Ashley's Bills for Infant Labour.

The parliamentary session of 1843 was not characterised by any measures of very great importance. So great had been the change, both in finance and commercial policy, introduced in the preceding year, that men stood still, as it were, in anxious and silent expectation of the event, and trusting for the introduction of important measures to the all-powerful Minister by whom so many had been already introduced. Such measures as were brought in related chiefly to the alleviation of that suffering which had prevailed during so many painful years, and was only towards the close of the year beginning to be alleviated. Of the many evils which that long and mournful period introduced, not the least was the almost universal use of infant labour, which had been in a measure forced upon the working classes in the manufacturing districts by the deplorable destitution to which they had so long been reduced. The infants in the mineral and manufacturing districts in an especial manner stood in need of legislative protection, for there the workshop and the mine stood in fearful competition with

* Exports and Imports of Great Britain.

Years.	Imports. Official Value.	Exports. Declared Value.	Revenue.
1839	£62,004,000	£53,233,580	£47,844,000
1840	67,432,964	51,406,430	45,567,565
1841	64,377,962	51,634,629	48,937,397
1842	65,204,729	47,381,023	48,580,026
1843	70,093,353	52,278,449	52,582,817†
1844	85,281,958	58,584,292	54,003,754

† Income-tax.

—Porter, 356, 473, 3d edit.

the domestic hearth and the school; and even the best disposed parents were forced to send their children to work at a very early period of life, in order to add to the scanty earnings of the family. Struck with these evils, but unhappily still blind to the real cause to which they were owing, a philanthropic and energetic nobleman, whose life has been devoted to the amelioration of the poor, brought in a bill in 1842 for a committee to inquire into the employment of women and children in mines and collieries: Government acceded to the motion, and the committee was appointed. The evidence which they collected was of so startling and horrible a kind that it led to the bill, which he introduced on the report of the committee, passing both Houses with very little opposition, except from the mineral proprietors immediately interested. By this Act the employment of females in mines was absolutely prohibited in all cases; that of boys was limited to ten years of age and upwards, and inspectors were appointed to see the Act carried into full execution. This change was severely felt at the time, as tending to throw a number of hard-working women and children out of employment, and in the first instance it augmented rather than relieved the distress in that branch of industry. Yet was the change loudly called for, and in the end beneficial; for it put an immediate stop to a practice, a remnant of savage times, which utterly brutified and demoralised women; and it protected in some degree the class in the community which stood most in need of the shield of the Legislature—infant children employed in underground labour, withdrawn from the sight and sympathy of the great body of the community.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxv. 1097; Mart. ii. 554, 555.

79. Sir James Graham's unsuccessful Factory and Education Bill.

Encouraged by this success, Lord Ashley brought forward a motion for an address to the Queen for a general system of religious education for the working classes, and this was followed up by a bill, introduced by Sir James Graham, for the better regulation and education of factory children. By this bill it was proposed

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

that no children between the ages of six and thirteen should work more than six and a half hours; that they should be obliged to attend schools appointed for the purpose; and that the children of Catholics and Dissenters should be committed for so many hours in each week to religious teachers, according to the creed of their respective parents. The measure was to include pauper children at factories, and the children of all persons, whether paupers or not, whom their parents chose to send to the school, whether they were factory children or not. There was to be seven trustees to each school under the Act, three of whom were to be the clergyman of the district and two of his churchwardens; the other four elected by the ratepayers. The bill, which was evidently founded on the right principles on the subject, met with very general support in the House of Commons; and the Queen's reply to the address presented to her on the subject was very cordial. But difficult in the extreme are all attempts at beneficent legislation in matters where sectarian zeal or sacerdotal ambition deem themselves interested. The Dissenters took fright at the composition of the boards of parish trustees, even though the larger proportion of them were to be elected by the ratepayers, of whom they boasted that they possessed a majority; and such was the clamour raised on the subject, and the multitude of petitions which flowed in from the efforts of the Dissenters, that Sir James Graham, with expressions of extreme regret, was obliged to withdraw, first the educational clauses, and at last the whole bill.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxvii. 354, 422, lxviii. 1103, lxix. 1568.

80. New Factory Bill, and Lord Ashley's Ten-hours' amendment.

Next session Sir James Graham, taught by experience the extreme danger of meddling, in the most remote degree, even for the most salutary and beneficial purposes, with institutions which rouse sectarian jealousy or solicitude, introduced a bill which, without any educational clauses at all, professed simply and solely to limit the undue working of the operatives, whether male or

female, in future. The fate of this bill was very curious, and strongly illustrative of the varying and antagonistic influences which had now come to bear on the House of Commons. When the bill was sent to the committee, Lord Ashley moved an amendment, by which the working hours of women and young persons under fourteen years of age were to be reduced from twelve to ten hours a-day. Sir James Graham opposed this with reluctance and pain, on the ground that the change was too violent; that the limiting the hours of women and children would necessarily draw after it that of adults also; and that thus the change would come to reduce the hours, and of course the produce, of labour in factories by a sixth, and put in hazard the subsistence of two millions of persons. There was some truth, but great exaggeration, in these statements, to which O'Connell lent the additional weight of his powerful voice, which declared, that if the amendment became law, "Manchester would become a tomb." Notwithstanding these sinister predictions, the amendment was carried by Lord Ashley in the Commons by a majority of *nine*, the numbers being 272 to 263. This was considered a serious defeat to ministers, as the amendment had been opposed by their whole strength, and great efforts were accordingly made to get the veto rescinded. They succeeded in doing so by a majority of *seven* in a subsequent stage of the bill, and immediately before, they had by a majority of three negatived the proposal of twelve hours. Government, seeing the House thus vacillating, hinted in no obscure terms that they would withdraw the bill; and Lord Ashley upon this gave way, and moved the adoption of eleven hours in all cases, as a reasonable compromise for three years, and ten hours after that time. After a long and interesting debate, the bill as amended was carried, the substitution of ten for eleven hours being rejected by a majority of 138.[1] It was not seriously opposed in the House of Lords, and became law without

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxii. 277, lxxiii. 1073, 1101, 1110, 1263, lxxiv. 1460, 1463, lxxv. 915, 1104.

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

any educational clauses; affording a melancholy proof of the prevalence of sectarian over philanthropic views in the religious, and of considerations of gain over those of humanity in the worldly portion of the community.

81. Reflections on this subject.

In reflecting on this important question, there is one consideration of paramount importance, to which the public are now only beginning to open their eyes, but without a due regard to which, all legislation on the subject will be evaded and become inoperative. This is, that such is the inversion of the feelings of nature which takes place in manfacturing and mining districts, and such the straits to which, from the vicissitudes of commerce, the persons engaged in them are reduced, that the worst enemies of children are often *their own parents*, and all attempts at general education are elusory, unless due provision is made to guard against the fatal precocity of labour. In agricultural pursuits, the severity and strength required in the toil is in general a sufficient protection to children against the oppression of infant labour; but in manufactories and collieries the case is different,—something can be extracted from the employment of the young even in their earliest years. From seven upwards the work of a child is worth something—often as much as four or five shillings a-week. No strength is required to watch a wheel, or pour out oil, or open a valve. *The workshop stands in fearful competition with the school.** Education in general is not wholly neglected, but it is given in so imperfect a manner, or to so small an extent, that it is of scarcely any benefit in life. The inevitable contagion of vice from the assemblage of numbers, the facilities afforded for the indulgence of precocious passion, by the young of both sexes being constantly

* So general is the operation of this cause, that it has been ascertained by recent statistical researches, that in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Bolton, and other manufacturing towns, the proportion of children at school to the entire population is only 4 or 5 per cent, or 1 in 20 or 25, whereas in Prussia it is 1 in 10; in Austria, 1 in 9; in Canada, 1 in 7.

together, counteract all the incipient benefits of education. Hence the vast proportion of the criminals who turn out to be persons "imperfectly educated," and the astounding fact, that the persons convicted by a jury or summarily in England, are now a hundred thousand in a year, being about 1 in 180 of the population. Unless the employment of children in mines and manufactories is *absolutely prohibited below fourteen years of age*, all attempts to educate generally the manufacturing and mining population will prove, generally speaking, nugatory and useless.

82. Rebecca riots.

The year 1843, however, was marked by a succession of riots in an entirely rural portion of Great Britain, which proved that the seeds of evil were not sown only in the manufacturing and mining districts, but that, unless local grievances were looked to and redressed, the country might become as disturbed in the agricultural, as it had ever been in the worst parts of Ireland. Loud complaints had long been made of the heavy tolls paid, especially on the cross-roads in South Wales, and the ruinous multitude of separate trusts, which rendered a ticket given on one line unavailing even within two hundred yards, if you turned off it. Such was the weight of these exactions, that they had come, in many places, to absorb nearly the whole profit of farmers in carrying their humble produce to market. These complaints, however, as is generally the case with the statement of grievances not supported by powerful Parliamentary influence which persuades, or violent popular resistance which intimidates, met with no attention, and the people secretly determined to take the matter into their own hands. In 1839 a set of gates peculiarly obnoxious had been pulled down by the people who suffered under them, and several of the county magistrates, by becoming trustees on the roads, had prevented their being again put up. The victory, as usual in all cases where popular will effects its object by illegal means, only led

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

to fresh acts of violence. The people held meetings of persons suffering under the exactions in remote and sequestered places at night, and organised a conspiracy of a very singular kind. They chose for their text the words of Scripture, "And they blessed Rebecca, and said unto her, Let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them."[1] In pursuance of the plan agreed on, they elected a chief, dressed him in women's clothes, and set about the destruction of all the gates which they deemed objectionable, and the hindrance of their reconstruction. The work of destruction began in the winter 1842-43, and at first it was deemed rather a mischievous frolic than anything else; but ere long it assumed a more serious aspect. In the daytime everything was quiet and orderly in the extreme. The farmers paid their tolls as usual at all the gates without complaint, and work in the fields and villages went on as usual. But no sooner did darkness set in than bands of armed men began to traverse the roads and surround the obnoxious toll-bars. The loud sound of horns was heard on all sides, calling the peasantry, who were for the most part inclined to their side, to join in the work of destruction. The discharge of firearms and the sound of the horns announced their approach; in the twinkling of an eye the toll-house was surrounded by a crowd of men in male and female attire, the doors forced open, and the inmates led out or bound with cords. Immediately the building was unroofed, the walls levelled, the toll-bar destroyed, and nothing but a heap of ruins left to mark where it had stood. In the morning all was again quiet; the labourers were alone seen at work in the fields; carts, as usual, traversed the roads, and but for the crowds which collected with secret triumph round the scene of former devastation, no one could have suspected that anything unusual had occurred.[2]

[1] Gen. xxiv. 60.

[2] Ann. Reg. 1843, 258, 264; Times' Reporter, July 1843; Spectator, 1843, 869, 875; Mart. ii. 524, 525.

These disorders, as is usually the case when they break out in a rural district where no police force exists, or

means are in existence either to prevent crime or arrest its perpetrators, for long went on unpunished. Large bodies of troops and police were sent down from London to the disturbed districts, with several of the most skilled detectives of the metropolis. For long, however, the rioters, as often occurs in such cases, eluded the whole efforts of the magistrates, in consequence of the universal adherence of the peasantry to the cause, and the rapid intelligence which they sent to the bands of rioters of the approach of any body of military or police, which was instantly followed by their dispersion and flight. At length, however, matters came to such a point that even the sympathy of the peasantry was alienated from the insurgents. Incendiarism was committed in many places, murder in some. An old woman, aged seventy-two, was shot dead, while the roof of her cottage was blazing around her. These atrocities roused the indignation of the better part of the people, who ceased in consequence to lend their aid to the escape or screening of the culprits. Twice Rebecca's horse was shot dead under her, and though the rider escaped on foot, yet several of her followers were captured, and committed for trial. Government, now thoroughly alarmed, acted energetically. A proclamation was issued by the Queen, calling on the magistrates and all good subjects to do their duty, and a royal commission sent down for the trial of the prisoners, who had now become very numerous.[1]

82. Increase of the riots.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1843, 262; Mart. ii. 525.

Baron Gurney, who presided over the commission, acted with equal humanity and discretion: his addresses to the prisoners drew tears from the eyes of all who heard them, from the intermixture they contained of the tenderness of a parent with the justice of a judge. Three of the worst were sentenced to long periods of transportation; the remainder, who were for the most part deluded peasants, escaped with various periods of imprisonment. The convicts issued an address to their countrymen recommending the cessation of rural disorders; and the commission of inquiry,

84. Termination of the troubles, and bill removing their cause.

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

which was everywhere most favourably received, reported in favour of a general consolidation of the turnpike trusts through South Wales; and a bill passed both houses of Parliament in the next session, founded on their recommendation.* Thus the Rebecca insurrection terminated in the entire success of the objects for which it was originally undertaken; and it leads to the melancholy reflection, that all the disorders and suffering consequent on it might have been avoided if the Government and Legislature had at once redressed the real injustice complained of, and paid that attention to *provincial* grievances at a distance from the seat of power, which they seldom fail to do to metropolitan, at its door.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxvi. 1954; Ann. Reg. 1843, 262; Spectator, 1843, 1036; Mart. ii. 525, 526.

85. The Chartist and Anti-Corn-Law movements.

Although the symptoms of amendment in several branches of manufacture was very apparent in the latter part of 1843, yet the general distress was still so great as to encourage both the Chartists and Anti-Corn-Law League to continue in their respective spheres the agitation of the public mind. Such was the activity of the former class of agitators, that they got up a petition, which was presented to the House of Commons, praying for the establishment of the six points of the Charter and the abolition of all monopolies, and which was said to contain 3,500,000 signatures! From the manner in which these petitions

* There is no reform in domestic administration more loudly called for than a general consolidation of road trusts, at least in every county, so that a ticket given at one bar shall be available at any other bar within five miles. This would be attended with equal benefit to the public, the road trustees, and those who have advanced money for them, for it would diminish essentially the expense of management. In the county of Mid-Lothian, where the produce of the tolls is £42,000 a-year, no less than £7000 annually has been saved by consolidating the trusts, while the public have obtained the great advantage of paying only one toll in five miles in any direction. Were a similar system adopted in the county of Lanark, it would probably, with a similar advantage to the community, effect a saving of £20,000 a-year; in that of York, of £80,000. The real obstacle to this great reform, as to most others, is the interested views of the surveyors and law agents on the several trusts, who would be affected by the change, and whose resistance to it has hitherto proved insurmountable from the influence they have acquired over the country gentlemen who nominally direct the affairs of the trusts. So powerful is this influence that it will probably never be overcome but by a general national movement, aided by the whole weight of Government.

were at that time got up by the popular agitators, it is probable the real number of signatures was not half so great, but still the number was immense. It was brought to the House by a long procession of working men, and it required sixteen men to carry it into the House. Mr Duncombe, who presented it, asserted that, after deducting those of youths and females, the signatures of 1,300,000 heads of families were appended to the petition. It made a great sensation, and Sir James Graham, on the part of Government, admitted the reality and wide extent of the distress of which the petitioners complained. From the emphatic manner in which "monopolies" were denounced in the petition, it was evident that the Anti-Corn-Law agitators had got the direction of the movement, or that a coalition had been entered into between the two sets of agitation. This impression was increased by a mournful event which occurred in January 1843, when Mr Drummond, private secretary to Sir R. Peel, was murdered near the Salopian Coffee-house, in Parliament Street, by an assassin, who mistook him for Sir R. Peel. It was proved at the trial that he was insane, and he was sentenced to confinement for life; but in the mean time the obnoxious act excited a very great degree of consternation, from an apprehension that it was the work of one or other of the great combinations by which the country was now convulsed. To such a length did this feeling go, that a most vehement debate took place soon after in Parliament, in the course of which Sir R. Peel declared that he held Mr Cobden "formally responsible" for the misery of the people.[1]

Jan. 21.

Feb. 17. 1 Ann. Reg. 1842, 152, 153—1843, 6,7; Chron.; Parl. Deb. lxvii. 143; Mart. ii. 527, 528.

86. Differences with America.

The distressed state of Great Britain ever since the monetary crisis of 1839, led, as it always does, to disputes with foreign powers, who sought to take advantage of our distresses to advance pretensions, or make acquisitions at our expense for themselves. The Americans had never got over the check they had received in their attempts to revolutionise Canada during the troubles of 1838; and,

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

in particular, they retained a very sore recollection of the catastrophe of the "Caroline," by which Sir Allan M'Nab had so signally defeated them. Matters were very near being brought to a crisis by the arrest of Mr M'Leod, a British subject, who was seized when transacting business in New York, on a charge of being implicated in that affair, and as the person who had slain one of the men who had perished on the occasion. The magistrates before whom he was brought, were about to discharge the prisoner on bail, seeing the offence, if offence it was, had been committed on British territory; but a mob got up and prevented his liberation, and this led to a report of a committee of Congress, to whom the matter had been referred, so extremely hostile, that it amounted to little short of a declaration of war. M'Leod, accordingly, was detained for trial, and this led to an unjustifiable incursion of some zealous Canadians into the American territory to get hold of a hostage for M'Leod, where they seized Colonel Grogan, an American subject, accused of incendiary acts in Canada. Fortunately M'Leod was able to bring such overwhelming evidence of an alibi, that after a very impartial charge from the judge, he was acquitted; and the wisdom of the British Government at once ordered the liberation of Grogan, so that the danger, which had been very great, passed away for the present.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1841, 317; Mr Fox's Note, March 12, 1841; Mart. ii. 653.

87. Question of the right of search.

The feelings of rancour on both sides, which these events had produced, did not, however, yet subside. A more serious cause of dispute soon after arose, founded on the right which the British Government claimed, and its cruisers exercised, of stopping American vessels, and searching them, with a view to ascertain whether they were British vessels carrying on the slave-trade under the American flag. This was quite a different right from that of searching neutral vessels during war to ascertain whether they were conveying articles contraband of war, so much the object of dispute during the revolutionary contest, and was grounded, not on an alleged right to search the American vessels

as neutrals, but the right to examine whether or not they were British vessels engaged in an illegal traffic. The Americans, however, maintained that this right of mutual search applied only to States which had signed treaties permitting it to prevent the Slave Trade, and that, as they were not parties to these treaties, they could not permit their vessels to be searched on the ground of looking for slaves, or on any other pretence. Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, while admitting that the Americans were no parties to these treaties, maintained that a right to stop American merchantmen, and call for production of their papers to see whether they were not British vessels carrying on the slave trade in disguise, was indispensable to prevent that odious traffic being carried on to an unlimited extent under neutral flags. The discussion had gone on for some time, when the Whigs went out of office, and then wore a very unpromising aspect; for the feelings of large bodies of men, the slave-owners in America, on the one side, and the British emancipators on the other, were involved in the contest, and neither Government could venture openly to resist their demands. Matters, too, had been much complicated by an insurrection of some slaves on board the American brig "Creole," which had sailed from New Orleans in October 1841, which proved successful, and ended in the slaves killing one man and wounding the captain, after which they brought the vessel to the British harbour of Nassau, in New Providence. The whole negroes, 133 in number, were liberated by the British authorities, under the directions of Government, upon the ground that every slave became free as soon as he touched the British soil, and that there was no law authorising the detention even of those charged with the mutiny and murder committed, not in the British dominions, but on the high seas.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1842, 309—1843, 318; Parl. Deb. lx. 320; Mart. ii. 654, 655.

The indignation of the Americans was loudly excited by this untoward event. The slave States of the Union immediately took fire; denunciations of piracy and abet-

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

88. The question is settled by Lord Aberdeen.

ting murder were loudly hurled at the British government, and blood and fire were openly threatened in return. But never was a truer maxim than that it requires the consent of two persons to make a quarrel. A soft word, a seasonable explanation, often turns aside wrath, and sometimes prevents the most serious wars that threaten to devastate the world. When Lord Aberdeen succeeded to the Foreign Office in September 1841, he spared no pains to explain to the American Government the real nature of the right for which the British contended, and to soften the demand by the offer of reparation in all cases where injury had really been sustained, and a full exposition of the orders given to the British cruisers, which were of the most forbearing description. Fortunately for the peace of the world, these explanations, conceived in the most mild and conciliatory spirit, were met with similar dispositions on the part of the American minister in London, Mr Stevenson, who laboured not less assiduously to explain to his Government the real nature of the British pretensions and the spirit of moderation by which their Government was actuated. The result was an amicable adjustment of this most delicate and dangerous question, without any loss of character or honour on either side. The British Government disclaimed all right to stop or search American vessels *as such* during peace, or to do more than merely require production of their papers, to see whether or not they really belonged to the nation whose flag they bore, with a view to discovering whether they had slaves on board, and then only under such restrictions and responsibilities as effectually guarded against abuse; and the American admitted that "the apparent difference between the two governments was one of definition rather than principle, and that a right to be exercised only under such restrictions, can scarcely be considered as anything more than a privilege asked for and either conceded or withheld on the usual principles of international co-unity."[1] Thus was the question, once so threatening, satisfactorily adjusted, and it

[1] Ann. Reg. 1842, 309—1843, 318; President's Message.

was settled that when reasonable grounds existed for suspecting that the United States flag was used only as a pretence, the British cruiser might stop the vessel and demand production of the ship's papers, under the liability of making reparation for damage or delay, in the event of the vessel proving to be really American.[1] *

89. Dispute about the Maine boundary: Its origin.

Scarcely was this delicate question in this manner satisfactorily adjusted than a fresh and still more serious cause of difference arose from the unsettled state of the Maine frontier. This arose from the ignorance which prevailed on both sides when the treaty recognising the independence of the United States by Great Britain was concluded in 1783, in regard to the geography of the wild and uninhabited district which lay between Canada and the adjoining provinces of America, and the little importance

* "The undersigned renounces all pretension on the part of the British Government to visit and search American vessels in time of peace. Nor is it *as American* that such vessels are ever visited. But it has been the invariable practice of the British navy, and as the undersigned believes, of all the navies in the world, to ascertain by visit the real nationality of merchant vessels met with on the high seas. In certain latitudes, and for a particular object, the vessels referred to are visited, not as American but rather as British vessels engaged in an unlawful traffic, and carrying the flag of the United States for a criminal purpose, or as belonging to states which have by treaty ceded the right of search to Great Britain, and which right it is attempted to defeat by fraudulently bearing the protecting flag of the Union, or finally as piratical outlaws, professing no claim to flag or nationality whatever. Should the vessel visited prove American, the undersigned adds with pain that even though manacles, fetters, or instruments of torture, or even a number of slaves are found on board, the British officer could interfere no further."—LORD ABERDEEN *to* MR STEVENSON, *Sept.* 14, 1841; *Ann. Reg.* 1842, 310, 311.

"To seize and detain," said the American President in reply, "a ship upon suspicion of piracy, with probable cause and in good faith, affords no just ground either for complaint on the part of the nation whose flag she bears, or claim of indemnity on the part of the owner. *The universal law sanctions, and the common good requires, the existence of such a rule.* The right under such circumstances not only to visit and detain, but to search a ship, is a perfect right, and involves neither responsibility nor indemnity. But with this single exception, no nation has a right in time of peace to detain the ships of another upon the high seas on any pretext whatever beyond the limits of the territorial jurisdiction. And such, I am happy to find, is substantially the doctrine of Great Britain herself in her most recent official declarations, and even in those communicated to the House. The declarations may well lead us to doubt whether the apparent difference between the two Governments be not one rather of definition than of principle."—*President's Message to Congress*, February 27, 1843; *Ann. Reg.* 1843, p. 318.

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

then attached to a line of demarcation through forests, which it was not then anticipated could ever come to be of value to either State. By degrees, however, this once solitary and secluded region came to be settled by the adventurous pioneers of civilisation on either side, and it became of the highest importance to ascertain to which they really belonged. The difficulty arose from the words in the treaty of 1783, which said that the frontier would be "a ridge which divides the waters which flow into the St Lawrence from those which flow into the Atlantic." The Americans maintained that the Bay of Fundy was part of the Atlantic, and that the ridge here referred to was one running from the head of the St Croix northward to certain highlands, which in this way came to include the whole of the St John River. A map was referred to in this treaty, but it was not at first discovered, and the matter was referred to arbitration in 1794, with power to choose an oversman by lot, and the lot having fallen to the Americans, he determined in favour of the American line. A map was published by Mr Tudors in 1783 in London, which adopted the American line, and another two years after which took the British line; and what is very singular, it came out afterwards that there was one map in the possession of the British Government which took the American line, and another in the possession of the American which adopted the British. In these circumstances there was abundant room for doubt and dispute on both sides; and the diplomatists on neither can be accused of bad faith, because they did not produce the documents on either, which militated against the sides which they were respectively called on to espouse. But what seems to cast the balance in a decisive way in favour of the British line is the fact that there was discovered in the archives of the Foreign Office at Paris a letter by Dr Franklin, who concluded the treaty, to M. de Vergennes, then Minister of Foreign Affairs at Paris, in which he says, "I have traced what I take to be the line in Mr Oswald's treaty" (that of

1783). A line was found in red ink in the map in possession of the American Government, which coincided with that contended for by the British Government; and coupling this fact with the expression in Franklin's letter, who drew the treaty and concluded it, there seems to be no doubt that this was the line intended on both sides by its authors.[1] *

[1] Lord Brougham; Parl. Deb. lxviii. 623, 624.

90. Proceedings regarding the dispute.

However this matter may stand as to the original merits of the dispute, nothing can be clearer than that it had become long after a fit subject of arbitration and compromise. The matter was referred, by mutual consent, to the King of Holland, and he gave an award, deciding two points in dispute in favour of the British, but not settling the third point, upon this ground, that there were not sufficient materials to determine what were "the highlands" mentioned in the treaty of 1783. Although this award brought the Americans much nearer the St Lawrence than was deemed consistent with the security of the British possessions in Canada, the British Government not only offered, but anxiously pressed, that the matter in dispute might be adjusted in terms of it; but the Americans refused to be bound by the award, alleging that the arbitrator was only empowered to decide in favour of one or other line, but not to divide the matter in dispute between them. Lord Palmerston, upon this, sent out two sets of commissioners,—one in 1839, to inquire into the merits of the line claimed by the British, and another in 1841, to do the same with that claimed by the Americans, and they both reported in favour of the British line. Matters were in this unsettled state, with the preponderance of evidence decidedly in favour of the

* "The map of Franklin," said Lord Campbell, "is, in my opinion, quite conclusive. If you assume that the map now known to be in existence was the map, as *I believe it was*, which was referred to in the letter of Dr Franklin, the negotiator of the treaty, to the Count de Vergennes, this was the very map on which the treaty was made, and after the production of that map before a jury of Englishmen, there would not be the slightest doubt as to what was the true boundary."—LORD CAMPBELL, *Parl. Deb.* lxviii. 663.

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

claim advanced by England, when Sir R. Peel came into power in October 1841. He was in no condition to assert the pretensions of his Government by force of arms. Two bad harvests, combined with an erroneous monetary system, had landed the nation in a deficiency of £4,000,000 yearly, including the cost of the Chinese and Affghanistan wars; and the naval and military establishments of the country, starved down to the very lowest point, were unable to meet any fresh requirements. Compromise was, therefore, to him not only recommended by prudence, but dictated by necessity, and he adopted the most effectual means for bringing it about. He selected Lord Ashburton for a pacific mission—a nobleman of distinguished talents and most conciliatory manners, and who, lately elevated to the peerage, was still the head of one of the greatest mercantile houses in the world, and intimately acquainted, both from business connections and extensive information, with the state of public feeling in America. Under such auspices, the matter was soon brought to a satisfactory issue. He left London in February 1842, and in August following concluded a treaty at Washington, which settled both the boundary question and the right of searching ships on the high seas in time of peace.[1]

Aug. 9.

[1] Parl. Deb. lxiii. 564; lxvii. 1242.

91. Terms of the treaty, and its reception in Great Britain.

By this treaty, the Americans obtained about seven-twelfths of the disputed territory, and the British only five-twelfths. They got the British settlement of Madawaska, and the navigation of the river of St John, and their territory ran in a salient angle almost into the heart of Canada. On the other hand, they were farther removed from the St Lawrence than they had been by the King of Holland's award, and they were excluded from a series of heights, of importance in a military point of view, on the right or American side of that river. Upon the whole, the balance, both in point of extent and value of acquisition, was decidedly in favour of the Americans; and although there were many complaints, in the first

instance, in the United States, yet, upon the whole, the country was satisfied, and Lord Ashburton was splendidly fêted in his travels through it on his return home. The feeling in Great Britain was more mixed, and with many of a more painful description. All were agreed that it was a great blessing that peace had been preserved, and that the whole territory in dispute was not worth one half-year's cost of a war. But there were many who regretted the sacrifice, not so much of dominion as of character, by which the pacification had been purchased. It was asked whether such a treaty would have been agreed to in the days of Chatham and Pitt,—how a great nation was to preserve its position in the world, if it surrendered its possessions rather than draw the sword; and Lord Palmerston's happy sobriquet of "the Ashburton capitulation" expressed so completely the general feeling, that it has come to designate the treaty ever since it was concluded.

92. Reflections on it.

But all this notwithstanding, there seems no doubt that Sir R. Peel and Lord Ashburton did right, *situated as they were*, in concluding the treaty. Granting all that Lord Palmerston said on the subject to be perfectly well founded, so far as the external character and influence of Great Britain were concerned, the question yet remained, whether, adverting to the internal situation of the country, it was then possible to have asserted the national honour in any more vigorous way. England had come, by pursuing the policy of looking only to the cheapest market for the purchase of the materials of its chief manufactures, to be dependent on the United States for five-sixths of the cottons which gave bread to the inhabitants of her chief manufacturing towns. She had established a system of currency which had rendered general credit and commercial industry of every kind entirely dependent on the retention of gold, and, in consequence of its large export, to buy grain during the five preceding bad years, the whole commercial and manufacturing classes had come

CHAP. XLI. 1843.

to be involved in the deepest distress. She had recently sustained an unparalleled disaster in Affghanistan, and had only just emerged from a costly war both in India and China. She had a military and naval force on so very reduced a scale, that not more than ten thousand men could have been collected, after providing for the necessary garrisons, to defend London, or ten sail of the line to assert the honour of the British flag in the Channel. In these circumstances, to have plunged into a fresh war with a considerable naval power, and the one from whom the materials for our chief manufactures were derived, would have been hazardous in the extreme, and might have induced dangers wholly disproportioned to any advantages to be derived from the contest.

93. The Oregon question: Its history.

Encouraged by the success with which the bold assertion of their claims on the Maine frontier had been attended, the Americans next proceeded to adopt a similar policy on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. A vast district of country, called OREGON, then lay between that alpine barrier and the sea, of great importance from its natural fertility, its mineral riches,—the rich island of Vancouver, two hundred and fifty miles long, abounding with coal, belonging to its territory,—and the command which it afforded of the Columbia river, the great stream which descended from its western fountains, and the destined channel of communication from the St Lawrence and the great chain of lakes to the Pacific Ocean. So little was either the geography or importance of this immense region understood when the treaty with the United States, in 1783, was concluded, that, literally speaking, nothing was arranged at all regarding it. So unsettled was the matter, and so discordant the claims of the British Government and the United States on the subject, that Lord Castlereagh said to Mr Rush, the American Minister, in 1822, that, "by holding up a finger, war could at any time be produced about it." So wide were the American pretensions, and so warm the feelings excited,

on both sides, that it was with no small difficulty that that lamented statesman, and after him Mr Canning, prevented hostilities actually breaking out regarding it. Sensible of the danger of such a state of things, the two Governments, in 1818, entered into a convention, by which the whole Oregon territory was to be open to settlers from both countries for the period of ten years, and this state of promiscuous occupation was to continue for an indefinite period after. It was impossible, however, that this uncertain and precarious state could remain after the country began to be occupied by settlers, however few and far between on either side. It was indispensable that they should know to whom they belonged, and to which government they owed allegiance. This necessity became more pressing when the increasing numbers and augmented spirit of adventure in the United States led to great numbers of the inhabitants of that country leaving their homes, and seeking new settlements in distant regions. In 1842 and 1843, great numbers of these hardy pioneers of civilisation, impelled by the want and stagnation of enterprise, which General Jackson's crusade against the banks had produced in the United States, crossed the Rocky Mountains, and, armed only with their rifle, cartridge belt, axe, and scrip, boldly settled in the desert wilderness. So strong did the passion for maintaining and extending these settlements become, that, in 1843, the President of the United States was constrained to give notice to the British Government, that he was about to put an end to the existing state of promiscuous possession—a determination which rendered it necessary to fix a boundary-line on this side also between the territories of the two Governments.[1]

[1] President's Message, 1824; Ann. Reg. 1824, 317; Canning's Life, i. 337; Parl. Deb. lxxxiii. 3; Ann. Reg. 1846, 320.

94. Conclusion of a treaty.

It was no easy matter to effect this object, for the passions of the Americans, now strongly excited, were hurrying them in great numbers to what they deemed the land of promise on the other side of the Rocky Moun-

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

tains. Large caravans were formed which traversed the pathless prairies, found their way over the stony barrier, and descended into the boundless wastes which extended from its foot to the shores of the Pacific. It seemed, from the numbers which went, and the haste with which their journey was urged on, that they were desirous to forestall the British, and occupy the country in dispute in such numbers that any attempt to dislodge or transfer them would be impossible to either power. In a word, they were doing exactly the thing which, at the same time, they effected in Texas, which was to squat down in sufficient numbers on the territory, to render it worth while for the Union to incorporate it with their other States, whereby, at one blow, they wrested from the Spaniards a region of 350,000 square miles in extent, or more than twice the area of France. The language used in Congress on the subject, especially in 1844 and 1845, was extremely violent, insomuch as to leave a pacific solution of the question apparently hopeless. To such a length did they go, that on 23d April 1846 the Congress passed a resolution that notice of the termination of the joint occupancy should be sent to the British Government, and providing for the occupation of the Oregon territory. This bill passed the Senate by a majority of 42 to 10, and the House of Representatives by 142 to 46. Every one in both countries now expected that the next step would be an assertion of their right to the entire territory in dispute, and an appeal to arms for its support. Fortunately, however, for the peace of the world, the Government of the United States was guided by more pacific views, and the treasury had not sufficiently recovered the terrible monetary crisis[1] produced by General Jackson's crusade against the banks, to render it advisable to face a fresh war, which would immediately lead to the destruction of their foreign trade, and ruin of the large revenue they derived from the import duties,[1] at the very time when

April 23, 1846.

June 1846.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1846, 326, 327; Mart. ii. 656, 657.

they had just declared war against the Republic of Mexico. - Lord Aberdeen sent out a proposal for a compromise, which was approved of by a large majority in the Senate, and accepted by the President, Mr Rush.

95. Its terms.

By this treaty, which arranged the respective claims of the parties on a very equitable footing, the territory on the continent was divided between the parties in such a way as to give the larger portion to the United States. The line stretched from a point in the 49th "latitude to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and thence southerly through the middle of the said channel and up Fuca Strait, provided that the navigation of the whole of the said channel and straits south of the 49th parallel of north latitude shall remain free and open to both parties. From the point which the 49th parallel of north latitude shall be found to intersect the great northern branch of the Columbia river, the navigation of the said branch shall be open to the Hudson Bay Company, and British subjects trading with the same, to the point where the said branch meets the main stream of the Columbia, and thence down the said main stream to the ocean." By this arrangement the whole of Vancouver's Island, a possession of great importance, remained to Great Britain. It enjoys a temperate climate, not unlike that of the British Islands; and from the valuable seams of coal which it contains, must ultimately come to be a possession of very great value. So closely joined are the British and American territories on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, and so much detached from all the rest of the world, that the celebrated American statesman, Mr Webster, has declared his conviction, that ere long their inhabitants will detach themselves from both States, and set up a separate Republic of their own on the shores of the Pacific.[1]

[1] Treaty, June 17, 1846; Ann. Reg. 1846, 327, 328.

These treaties, conducted with such difficulties, between Great Britain and the United States, are worthy of

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

96. Reflections on these Treaties.

remark, as indicating the advent of the period when the American population was bursting the limits of their territories, wide as they were, and pouring over in mighty streams into the adjoining States. So strong was this disposition, that it was with difficulty that the Governments withstood the pressure; and it was only by the accidental circumstance of the largest portion of the flood breaking into Texas, that the whole of Oregon was prevented from being overwhelmed. This is a very singular circumstance, especially when the stationary condition of the French population in Lower Canada is taken into consideration. It adds another to the many proofs with which history abounds, that Republican States, so far from being the most pacific, are the most warlike and aggressive of all nations; and that the *multis utile bellum* is in them a stronger provocative to conquest than either the ambition of kings or the rivalry of ministers. It points distinctly to democratic institutions as the great *expelling force* which drives civilised man from his native seats, and fills the wilderness of nature with hardy settlers, the destined fathers of mighty nations. But it is calculated not less strongly to evince how peculiarly these qualities are developed in the Anglo-Saxon more than any other race of mankind, and how admirably adapted their disposition, at once nomad and agricultural, is to their destined mission of clearing and peopling the vast forests which overspread the surface of the New World.

97. Origin of the Otaheite dispute with France.

America was not the only quarter in which, during the administration of Sir R. Peel, the British empire was threatened with hostility. It was on the very verge also of a war with France, and strange to say, the cause of discord was not any jealousy or ambitious projects of either power in Europe, but a contest for the protectorate of the distant island of Otaheite in the Pacific Ocean. To understand how this came about, it is necessary to premise that the beautiful island of Otaheite, so well known to British readers from Cook's Voyages, had of

late years been visited by the English missionaries, and its inhabitants had readily and sincerely embraced the Protestant faith. So rapid had been the spread of the Christian religion among the simple islanders of the Pacific, that the most sanguine hopes were entertained in England, that the entire conversion of the South Sea Islands would follow its establishment in the group of islands which surrounded Otaheite. The queen of that island, named Pomare, had embraced Christianity, and was a pupil of the missionaries. Sensible of the weakness of her little kingdom, she was very desirous of being taken under the protection of Great Britain, or as she expressed it, "to be allowed to sit under their flag." She accordingly made an application to George IV., in 1825, praying "that he would not abandon them, but regard them with kindness for ever." Lord Palmerston, however, who was Foreign Minister when the application arrived, was aware of the embarrassment which the protectorate of so distant and feeble a state might occasion, declined the proffered honour, though with every expression of friendship and regard for Queen Pomare and her subjects.[1]

1825.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1842, 337; Mart. ii. 646, 647; Guizot, Mem. Sir R. Peel, 153.

98. Interference of the French missionaries. 1836-37.

Meanwhile the French Roman Catholic missionaries, not less anxious than the English for the spread of their own faith, had also fixed upon Otaheite as the centre of their operations in the South Sea; and it was the rival pretensions of the missionaries of these two opposite creeds which embroiled the two countries, and had so nearly involved them in war. The Catholic missionaries, it would appear, had been hurried away by their zeal to carry matters too far, for in 1836 Queen Pomare sent a letter through Mr Pritchard, the British consul at Otaheite, requesting to know "whether the Roman Catholic missionaries who belonged to France, and persisted in coming to Otaheite and disturbing the peace of our Government, had the sanction of the British Government?" Lord Palmerston prudently replied that, as

29821

CHAP. XLI.

1843.

Otaheite was an independent state, the Queen of England could not in any manner interfere with the residence of foreigners in a territory which did not belong to her. The French, however, were not so easily got quit of; for they had formed, or were desirous of forming, a settlement in some of the adjoining islands, forming part of the Marquesas cluster, for the double purpose of establishing a harbour of refuge for their commercial vessels engaged in the South Sea fishery, and of founding a convict colony which might serve as a receptacle for part of the criminals with which their prisons in France were overcharged, and procure for that country some of the advantages which England had so long enjoyed from her penal settlements in New South Wales. The French authorities in this settlement complained that some outrages had been committed on two French missionaries, Messrs Laval and Cazet, who had been in Otaheite for the purpose of weaning over the natives from the Protestant to the Catholic faith, and this was made a ground by Admiral Dupetit-Thouars, the French commander on the station, for demanding reparation. Accordingly, on the 30th August 1838, he appeared off the island in the frigate Venus, having a body of land troops on board, and demanded, in the most summary way, that a letter of apology should be written by the Queen to the French Government, the sum of 2000 dollars paid to the persons injured, *and the French colours hoisted on the island*, and saluted with 21 guns on the 1st September. Being in no situation to resist this demand, Queen Pomare entered into a convention, in virtue of which all Frenchmen of every profession were to be allowed to establish themselves and trade freely in every part of her dominions.[1]

Aug. 30, 1838.

[1] Treaty, Aug. 30, 1838; Ann. Reg. 1842, 338; Ann. Hist. 1842, 254—App. 250; Guizot, Sir R. Peel, 154, 157.

99. The French take possession of Otaheite.

This convention, however, satisfied neither party. The presence of the French was so obnoxious to Queen Pomare, or her advisers, that in November of the same year she addressed another letter to Lord Palmerston praying for the protection of the British Government.

"Let," said she, "your flag cover us, and your lion defend us; determine the form in which we may shelter ourselves lawfully under your wings." In September 1839, Lord Palmerston returned an answer, which expressed concern for the difficulties which beset Queen Pomare, but declined to enter into an alliance, as "it would be impossible for her Britannic Majesty to fulfil with proper punctuality the defensive obligation which such a treaty would imply." The consequence was that the Queen, deprived of all aid from England, and unable to resist the hostile force with which she was threatened, was constrained to enter into a convention, in virtue of which the flag of Otaheite was lowered, and that of France hoisted in its room. This formal act of possession took place on 9th September 1842, regularly notified to the British Government. The instructions to Admiral Thouars had been to occupy the Marquesas Islands, but not Otaheite; so that this taking possession was unauthorised; but the French Government, deeming the national honour involved in supporting the act of their naval lieutenants, did not hesitate to ratify the protectorate, though they disavowed the assumed sovereignty.[1]

Sept. 9, 1842.

[1] Guizot, 158; Ann. Reg. 1843, 272.

100. Affair of Mr Pritchard, which complicates the case.

As it was only a protectorate, not an absolute dominion, which the French Government ratified in Otaheite, they engaged to respect the British missions; and although the British Government felt some jealousy at this assumption of their ancient rivals in a country which had long been on friendly terms with them, yet the moderation of the two Governments prevented any collision, and promised a pacific solution of the question. But difficult are all attempts of governments to preserve the peace of the world when that worst element of discord, religious zeal, has roused the passions of the people. From an island which slept in peace on the placid waters of the Pacific, arose a tempest which had well-nigh spread over the world. The Catholic and Protestant missionaries in Otaheite made the most strenuous efforts mutually

CHAP. XLI. 1844.

to supplant each other in the affections of the natives and both, animated with a zeal at once ardent and sincere, strove to establish their respective faiths by the ruin of their opponents. These feelings on both sides could hardly fail, ere long, to lead to a collision; and it occurred under circumstances which threatened the most serious results. An English missionary, Mr Pritchard, had become consul in the island; and although he had resigned his office when the French protectorate was established, his resignation had not been accepted, and he still *ad interim* held the office. He was very obnoxious to the French authorities on account of his zeal and influence with the natives, who had contracted a strong aversion to their Gallic masters; and a French sentinel having been disarmed by the natives, on the night of the 2d March 1844, it was made a pretext for seizing and imprisoning Mr Pritchard "in reprisal;" and he was released only on condition of his instantly leaving the Pacific. This he accordingly did, without seeing his family, and reached London by the way of Valparaiso. Matters now looked very serious, for the dignity of England had been outraged in the person of its accredited consul; and that of France seemed not less implicated in maintaining what had been done. Warm feelings were excited and expressed on both sides when the intelligence reached the two countries; and Sir R. Peel declared in Parliament, on 31st July 1844, "that the account was scarcely credible, so impossible did it seem that such an outrage could be offered under the circumstances; but that the reply of the French Government to the remonstrances of England would soon arrive, when it would doubtless appear they would be as ready to disavow this act as that of dethroning Queen Pomare."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 261; Parl. Deb. lxxiii. 241; Spectator, 1844, 724.

Fortunately there were at the head of the foreign affairs of the two Governments, at this moment, two men who, equally alive to the honour of their country, were yet not less impressed with the paramount importance of pre-

serving peace between them, and who felt that each had succeeded to such an inheritance of historic glory that it could afford to listen only to the dictates of reason and justice. M. Guizot felt that the French officer concerned in the affair had overstepped due bounds in the removal of Mr Pritchard, and agreed to make him reparation, the amount of which was to be referred to the British and French Admirals on the station; and Lord Aberdeen agreed to accept this reparation without insisting for the dismissal of the officer who had given orders for his seizure. The right of dominion over Otaheite, at first asserted by Admiral Dupetit-Thouars, had been disclaimed by the French Government, and the more modest title of Protectorate alone assumed. Thus was this delicate and dangerous affair adjusted by mutual moderation and good sense, without any injury to the honour of either party; and M. Guizot, in announcing it to the Chamber of Deputies, expressed in noble and generous terms the principles by which the Governments of both had been actuated. "The good understanding which now subsists between the two Governments has been called an *entente cordiale;* friendship, alliance. Gentlemen, it is so; but it is something more novel, more rare, more great, than all that. There are now in France and England two Governments, who believe that there is room in the world for the prosperity and the material and moral activity of both countries; who do not think that they are obliged to regret, deplore, or fear, their mutual progress; and who are satisfied that they may, by the full development of their forces of every kind, aid instead of injuring each other. And the two Governments who believe that it is possible to do this, believe also that it is their duty to do it—that they owe it alike to the honour and the good of their country, to the peace and the civilisation of the world. And that which they mutually believe possible they have actually done; they have reduced their ideas to practice, and they have evinced on every occasion a

The matter is adjusted.

CHAP. XLI. 1844.

mutual respect for rights, a mutual attention to interests, a mutual trust in intentions and words. This is what they have done; and thence it is that incidents the most delicate, events the most grave, are accommodated without producing either a rupture or even a coldness in the relations of the two countries." Noble words! betokening the rise of that spirit, founded on mutual respect and admiration, which led these two ancient rivals to stand side by side on the fields of Alma and Inkermann.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 22, 1845; Guizot, Sir R. Peel, 169; Ann. Reg. 1844, 257, 261.

102. Spanish marriages.

Negotiations of the highest importance took place between Great Britian and France at this period, regarding the Spanish marriages and succession; but they will come to be narrated with more propriety in the history of the latter country during the same time, as they had a material influence on its future fortunes, and determined in some degree the ultimate fate of Louis Philippe.

103. Reduction of the 3½ per cents. March 8, 1844.

The reviving prosperity of the country, in consequence of the cessation of the import of grain, and increased issue of notes in 1843 and 1844, had so raised the price of stocks as enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to bring forward a bill, in March 1844, for the further reduction of the whole public funds excepting the 3 per cents. The 3½ per cents, which composed £250,000,000 out of the £760,000,000 which formed the public debt, had stood in the beginning of the year at 102½, and of course a fair opportunity was presented of paying them off at par. Mr Goulburn was not slow in taking advantage of this auspicious state of things; and he brought forward, on 8th March, a proposal for the conversion of the 3½ into, first, 3¼, and ultimately 3 per cents. The first reduction was to take place immediately, the last in ten years. By this means he calculated that he could effect a saving at once of £625,000 a-year, and in 1854 of £1,250,000. As this reduction was accompanied with an offer to pay off the dissentients at par, it involved no breach whatever of

the public faith, and was received in the most favourable manner by both sides of the House, and the public generally. The result fully justified the Chancellor's expectations, for the debt held by the dissentients was a perfect trifle, only £200,000, and was immediately paid off. The success of this measure, whereby the old £5 and £4 per cents were at length, as in October 1854, reduced to 3 per cent, afforded the clearest demonstration of the erroneous principle on which Mr Pitt originally proceeded in borrowing so large a proportion of the public debt in the 3 per cents instead of the five or four per cents; for if the latter system had been universally adopted, the saving effected on the interest of the public debt, which at this time was £760,000,000 in round numbers, would have been, between 1815 and 1854, no less than two-fifths of the entire interest, or above £100,000,000 a-year.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 153, 155; Parl. Deb. lxxjii. 361, 385.

104. Favourable financial statement of 1844.

The financial statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer next day, exhibited an equally flattering appearance, which was hailed with the more satisfaction by the nation, that it was the first time during a long and dreary course of years that such a prospect had been presented to the public. The estimated revenue had been £50,150,000, the actual receipts were £52,835,000, showing an increase above the estimates of no less than £2,685,000. This was in itself gratifying, and the more so from its exhibiting such a contrast to what the budget had presented for many years past. But it became doubly so when the several items were taken into consideration, for they indicated, in an unmistakable manner, a remarkable increase in the comfort of all classes. The estimate of the property-tax had been £5,100,000; it produced £5,326,000. The duties on tea had produced £300,000 in excess, those on wine £359,000, those on sugar £200,000. The customs, estimated at £19,000,000, had produced £21,426,000. On the other hand, the expenditure had fallen short of the estimate by £650,000; and the East India Company had made a large payment

CHAP. XLI. 1844.

out of the monies received by the treaty with China, to be afterwards narrated—altogether the surplus of the present year, ending 5th April 1854, had been £4,165,000; an amount so large as enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer not only to pay off the deficiency, amounting to £2,749,000, of last year, but to realise a net surplus of £1,400,000 for the present year.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 154, 156; Parl. Deb. lxxiii. 392, 399.

105. Reduction of taxes.

With whatever satisfaction this unwonted financial statement was received by the country, it was very far from proving a source of quiet to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; for no sooner was the announcement of a surplus so considerable made public, than he was assailed by a perfect host of petitioners, each praying that the duties immediately affecting themselves should be taken off; while the class affected by the income-tax loudly clamoured that that heavy burden should be removed, as the war, which alone had been put forward as a ground for its imposition, had come to a conclusion both in India and China. Sir R. Peel, however, adhered to his principle of retaining the direct taxation, and remitting such taxes as were deemed advisable solely on indirect articles. Those selected for relief were glass, vinegar, currants, coffee, marine insurances, and wool. The entire amount of taxes reduced was only £387,000. This was loudly complained of by Mr Hume, who insisted that Government should forthwith make a large reduction in the army and navy, by which they would be able to remit taxation to ten times the amount of that proposed. But to this demand the Prime Minister made the following satisfactory answer: "When honourable members tell us that we ought to do away with the income-tax, I request them to consider what has occurred since 1835. Three things have occurred. There has been a rebellion in Canada, hostilities in Syria, a terrible disaster in India, and a war in China.[2] Let us not be told, then, that we ought to reduce, or that we can reduce, the income-tax. It is very easy to talk of making reductions, but the difficulty

[2] Parl. Deb. lxxiii. 405, 417; Ann. Reg. 1844, 157, 158.

is to show that, in the end, those reductions will consist with true economy or the maintenance of the national independence."

106. Reduction of Sugar Duties.

The duties on sugar were made the subject of a separate debate, of great interest, as affording demonstrative evidence of the effect which, after a trial of six years, the emancipation of the negroes had produced on the productive industry of the once splendid West Indian colonies. It was stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Parliament, that, before the Emancipation Bill, the West Indies had produced sugar enough for the consumption of this country, and about a third more which was exported, which had the effect of keeping down the price of the whole to the level which that surplus could command in the market of Europe. When emancipation, however, took place, it was foreseen that the supply would be considerably diminished, and to meet that probable event Parliament brought the duties on East and West India sugar nearer to a level. Experience had proved, however, that this change was not equal to the exigencies of the case, especially as the improved condition of the people in Great Britain, and our altered relations with China, rendered it probable that an increased consumption of sugar to mix with tea would take place. For this purpose he proposed that, after the 10th of November next, free-grown sugar of China, Java, Manilla, or any other which her Majesty, by order in council, might certify to be not slave-grown sugar, should be admitted at £1, 14s. per cwt., with five per cent additional, being 10s. more than the duty of 24s. on West India sugar. To this proposal the House cordially agreed, the necessity of the case, from the diminution of West India sugar, being apparent to all. Indeed, so strongly was it felt, that Lord John Russell moved an amendment that *slave-grown* sugar should be admitted to supply the deficiency of the West Indies, which was only negatived by a majority of 69, the numbers being 197 to 128. Thus was the first step in advance made to free trade in sugar; but

CHAP. XLI. 1844.

it was an ominous circumstance that the House divided on the admission of slave-grown sugar on the same terms as that of free labour, and a strange one that the amendment to that effect was proposed by the leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons. A subsequent amendment, moved by Mr Miles, on behalf of the West India proprietors, that the duty on British colonial sugar, whether from the East or West Indies, should be lowered to 20s., and the foreign left at 34s., was negatived only by a majority of 22 in committee, after it had been carried by a small majority against Ministers in the House itself.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 162, 169; Parl. Deb. lxxv. 154, 183, 219, 968, 1012, 1082.

107. Bank Charter Act.

But all the measures of this session sink into insignificance compared with the all-important one of the BANK CHARTER ACT, which came on during its continuance, and produced more immediate and important effects on the country than any other measure recorded in British annals. At the last granting of the exclusive privileges to the Bank in 1833, it had been provided that it was to last for twenty-one years, with a power of modification by Parliament at the end of ten years, if Government should be so inclined. Sir R. Peel resolved to take advantage of this permissive clause to place the issue of paper, whether by the Bank of England or country banks, under additional restrictions. The object of this was to prevent, so far as possible, the recurrence of such terrible calamities as the country had undergone in consequence of the fever of speculation in 1835 and 1836, followed by the crises of 1839 and subsequent years, and at once check rash speculation at one time, and undue suspension at another. In this opinion the country generally concurred; for the recollection of the distress recently experienced, and which every one saw was owing to something wrong with the currency, was too vivid not to inspire an almost universal wish that some remedy could be discovered for such multifarious and often-recurring calamities. The only parties that took the alarm were the country bankers and their immediate

dependents, who were apprehensive that the power of issuing notes, the great source of their profits, would be taken from them; and they issued several pamphlets on the subject, some of which went through several editions, and made a very considerable impression. Sir R. Peel, however, was too wary a leader to run directly athwart so powerful a body as the country bankers; on the contrary, he framed his measure in such a manner as ere long secured their general support. The subject was introduced by him in a long and lucid speech of three hours' duration, which was listened to with profound attention on both sides of the House, and never certainly was a subject of more vital importance brought under the consideration of Parliament.[1]

[1] Mart. ii. 625; Ann. Reg. 1844, 191, 193.

108. Sir R. Peel's argument in support of his Bill.

"In legislating on this subject," said Sir R. Peel, "it is first necessary to consider what is the principle of value, a point upon which there is not a uniformity of opinion. Some say it is a mere abstraction or measure of value, as a foot or a yard is of distance. I cannot accede to that opinion. In my opinion, it means, and can only mean, a certain weight of precious metal of a certain fineness; and the engagement of the makers of a promissory note is to pay on demand a definite quantity of that metal and fineness. This was just the state of matters prior to 1797, when bank paper became issuable without convertibility into metal. The reason why an ounce of gold costs £3, 17s. 10½d. is, that that is the proportion which the one metal bears to the other; and if you mean a certain advantage to debtors, you should give a direct discount, and not attempt indirectly to do the same thing, by saying it is worth £5. In a word, gold is the only safe foundation for the currency; and although the necessities of commerce may require that a paper circulation should be mixed with it, yet the currency can never rest on a proper foundation unless the one is convertible into the other.

"I propose, therefore, with respect to the Bank of

CHAP. XLI.

1844.

109. Continued.

England, that there should be a separation of the two departments of issue and of banking; that there should be a separate set of offices for each, and a different system of accounts. I likewise propose, that to the issue department should be transferred the whole amount of bullion now in the possession of the Bank, and that the issue of notes should hereafter take place on two foundations, and two foundations only: first on a definite amount of securities, and after that exclusively upon bullion; so that the action of the public would, in this latter respect, govern the amount of the circulation. There will be no power in the Bank to issue notes on deposits and discount of bills; and the issue department will have to place to the credit of the banking department the amount of notes which by law the issue department will be entitled to issue. The banking business of the Bank, I propose, should be governed on precisely the same principles as would regulate any other body dealing with Bank of England notes. The fixed amount of securities on which I propose that the Bank of England should issue notes, is £14,000,000, and the whole remainder of the circulation is to be *issued exclusively on the foundation of bullion.* I propose that there should be a complete and periodical publication of the accounts of the Bank of England, both in the banking and issue departments, as tending to increase the credit of the Bank, and prevent panic and needless alarm.

110. Continued.

"With respect to private banks, I propose that the general principle is to be a distinction between the privilege of issue and the conduct of banking business, the object being to limit competition, but to make the great change with as little detriment as possible to private interests. To effect this object from the date of the act, no new bank of issue will be allowed to be constituted; but all the existing banks will be allowed to continue their issues, *upon condition that they do not exceed their present amount,* to be calculated on an average of the

last ten years. While the issues are to be restricted, business will be facilitated. The privilege of suing and being sued in the name of the office-bearers will be accorded, and the power of an authorised partner to bond the whole in relation to the banking business, and no new bank established but upon application to Government, and proper registration of prospective and paid-up shares and capital. All banks are to be obliged to publish a full and periodical list of all partners and directors, and banks of issue to publish an account of their issues. The Bank of England will be allowed to extend its issues on securities beyond the £14,000,000 on emergency, but only with the assent of three members of the Government; and in that case the whole of the net profit on issues beyond the £14,000,000 is to revert to the Government. The "legal tender clause," making Bank of England notes a legal tender everywhere but at the Bank of England, is to be continued, as tending to facilitate the circulation of Bank paper. The Bank of England shall be bound to buy all the gold brought in, at a trifle below the present price.

"By these means the circulation of the whole of England issuing on securities will be about £22,000,000, £9,000,000 being the proportion of the country banks to £14,000,000 of the Bank of England. The circulation of the country, however, is, and requires to be, £30,000,000, and it is the additional £8,000,000 that requires to be provided for. This portion of our currency must be based on gold, for it is the portion required for foreign commerce, in which national securities are of no avail. The gold wanted for this portion of our commerce *may be assumed to be at the utmost* £8,000,000; for before anything like that quantity could have been drained out of the country, prices must have fallen so low as to have caused a large exportation of goods and return of gold. As the provision of this Act is, that gold is always to be in store beyond the £22,000,000 based on national

III. Concluded.

CHAP. XLI.

1844.

securities, there can be no fluctuation in the amount of paper money otherwise than in proportion to the amount of gold brought for sale to the Bank of England; and as the Bank is obliged to buy with its notes all the gold brought to it, the gold bought in will be surely replaced by an equal amount of paper. When gold, on the other hand, is drawn out, the paper that comes in will be cancelled—a necessity, as the Bank has hitherto immediately re-issued the notes brought in, thus increasing the drain upon itself, at the very moment when a severe drain has set in of itself."[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxiv. 720, 755, 1346, lxxvi. 1061; Ann. Reg. 1844, 191, 196.

112. Argument against the Bill.

Such were the views entertained by Sir R. Peel and the great majority in both Houses of Parliament, which agreed with him on this all-important subject, and such the arguments by which their views were supported. So general was the concurrence in these views, that no one ventured to oppose them in either House on principle, and the second reading passed without a division. The only serious opposition which showed itself was to that portion of the bill which went to affect the interests of the country bankers, and the restrictions about to be imposed on their issues. Mr Hawes was the exponent of their views, and

* Sir R. Peel's resolutions were in these terms, which contain an able summary of his views on the subject:—

"I. That it is expedient to continue to the Bank of England, for a time to be limited, certain of the privileges now by law given to that corporation, subject to such conditions as may be provided for by any act to be passed for that purpose.

"II. That it is expedient to provide by law that the Bank of England should henceforth be divided into two separate departments, one exclusively confined to the issue and circulation of notes, the other to the conduct of the banking business.

"III. That it is expedient to limit the amount of securities upon which it shall be henceforth lawful for the Bank of England to issue notes payable to the bearer on demand; and that such amount shall only be increased under certain conditions, to be prescribed by law.

"IV. That it is expedient to provide by law that a weekly publication should be made by the Bank of England of the state both of the circulation and of the banking departments.

"V. That it is expedient to repeal the law which subjects the notes of the Bank of England to the payment of the composition for stamp duty.

"VI. That, in consideration of the privileges to be continued to the Bank of

he moved an amendment on the 13th June to the effect, "That no sufficient evidence has been laid before this House to justify the proposed interference with banks of issue in the management of their issues." "The object," said he, "of the present bill, is to make the paper circulation conform more closely to the gold circulation, which is declared to be prevented by the unlimited competition in the issue of paper. I deny that unlimited competition; for the convertibility of each note into gold at the will of the holder, is a natural and sufficient check on an over-issue of paper. There is no foundation for the doctrine advanced by the Bullion Committee, that the difference between the Mint and the market price of gold is the measure of the depreciation of the currency. That difference is entirely owing to the political causes which create a greater demand for gold, and therefore render it more valuable in one part of the world than another. It is a mere gratuitous assumption, wholly unsupported either by reason or evidence, to say that the difference is owing to over-issues. As little is the rise of prices during the war to be ascribed to that cause. On the contrary, England was in many articles, especially sugar and colonial produce, the cheapest country in the world at the very time

England, the rate of fixed annual payment to be made by the Bank to the public shall be £180,000 per annum.

"VII. That, in the event of any increase of the securities upon which it shall be lawful to issue such promissory-notes as aforesaid, a further annual payment shall be made by the Bank of England to the public, over and above the £180,000, equal to the net profit thereon arising.

"VIII. That it is expedient to provide by law that such banks of issue in England and Wales as now issue promissory-notes payable to bearer, shall continue to issue such notes, subject to such limitation as may be provided for that purpose.

"IX. That it is expedient to prohibit by law the issuing of any notes payable to bearer by any bank not now issuing such notes, or by any bank to be hereafter established in any part of the United Kingdom.

"X. That it is expedient to provide by law for the weekly production of the amount of promissory-notes payable to bearer on demand, circulated by any bank authorised to issue such notes.

"XI. That it is expedient to make further provision by law for the regulation of joint-stock banking companies."—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxiv. p. 755; *Ann. Reg.*, 1844, p. 196.

CHAP. XLI.

1844.

when the market price of gold was 25 per cent above the Mint price.

113. Concluded.

"The effect of the Government plan will be to substitute small bills of exchange for promissory notes, thus establishing a currency more easy of issue and more dangerous than that which now exists, while any commercial crisis pressing upon securities will compel the Bank to draw in its notes by whatever means and at whatever ruin to private credit, and thus lead to commercial difficulties unprecedented even in 1825 and 1839. A drain of bullion like that produced by the bad harvests of 1838 and 1839, might close the banking department of the Bank, and lead to such distress as would force on the repeal of the Corn Laws. If all restrictions were removed on the issue of paper, save the one important one of its being convertible into gold, no banker could commit an over-issue, for it would come back upon him instantly if it exceeded the wants of the country. The notes in circulation now are little more than half of what they were some years ago, and no proof whatever has been adduced to justify the proposed restrictions. It is the most palpable injustice to lay the whole blame of over-issue on the private bankers, and restrict them in future to their present amount of issue, without saying anything of the Bank of England, with whom the system of over-issue always began."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 200, 203; Parl. Deb. lxxiv. 1346.

114. The Bill passes both Houses. July 12.

Upon this debate, which went only to a subordinate part of the bill, and left untouched its leading principles, the majority for the Government was 155, the numbers being 185 to 30. A few small alterations in detail were afterwards adopted, but an attempt on the part of Mr Muntz, the member for Birmingham, to throw it out on the third reading was defeated by a still larger majority, the numbers then being 205 to 18.[2] In the House of Lords the bill excited very little discussion, and passed on 12th July without a division; so little was its paramount importance to all classes of the community under-

[2] Parl. Deb. lxxvi. 1061; Ann. Reg. 1844, 205, 206.

stood in either House, save by its immediate authors and promoters. It received the royal assent on the 19th of the same month.

115. Similar bills for Scotland and Ireland.

In announcing his measure regarding the currency, which extended only to England, Sir R. Peel declared his intention of introducing, in the next session of Parliament, a similar measure applicable to Scotland and Ireland. Early in the session of 1845 he proceeded to redeem his pledge, and the country was at that period eminently prosperous; and as no bad effects had as yet been experienced, so far as present appearances went, from the bill of the preceding year relating to England, the bill passed with very little discussion and scarcely any opposition. Sir R. Peel boasted, and apparently with reason, in bringing it forward, that "thus far experience was in favour of that Act; there had since been a period of extraordinary commercial activity and speculation, especially in manufactures and railways, and a great demand for capital; and the amount of gold and silver in the Bank of England was now £15,842,000." In pursuance of the principle of the English Act, it was proposed to withdraw all the present exclusive privileges enjoyed by the Bank of Ireland, and to oblige that bank, like all the other banks of issue in the country, to make weekly returns of the state of its business. In Ireland equally as in Scotland, the power at present enjoyed by the banks issuing notes was to be continued to them even below £5; but the amount to be issued by them was in future to be limited, so far as issuing on securities went, to the average of their note circulation for thirteen lunar months since 27th April 1844. Any excess of issue beyond these sums would require in both countries to be based on bullion. No bank established after the date of this Act was to have the power of issuing notes; and Bank of England notes were declared *not* a legal tender in Scotland. The amount of notes which under this Act might be issued on securities in Scot-

CHAP. XLI. 1844.

land would be £3,041,000, and in Ireland £6,271,000; the whole circulation beyond which was to be based on bullion. Thus was Sir R. Peel's banking system finally established with almost universal concurrence in both islands, and the amount of circulation in the two, taken together, that might be issued on securities, was fixed at somewhat above £31,000,000, being little more than a *half* of what it had been at the close of the war.[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1845, 203, 204; Parl. Deb. lxxxi. 374, 381.

116. Reflections on this debate.

It is difficult to say whether what was said or what was left unsaid, in these all-important debates on the currency, which ended in the entire establishment of Sir R. Peel's system, is the more calculated to awaken surprise and suggest reflection. The avowed object of the system was to check undue extension of the circulation, in periods of speculation and excitement, by the over-issue of bankers, and to provide a solid basis for any extension of the currency beyond what was deemed reasonable, by compelling it to be based, whether issued by the Bank of England or private bankers, on bullion alone. To effect this object, it was deemed essential to compel the Bank of England to take all the gold which might be brought to it at a trifle below the Mint price; forgetting that if the precious metals came to flow on in abundance into the country, and no extraordinary drain existed from

* The Notes now issuable on Securities in the British Empire were :—

Bank of England,	£14,000,000
English country banks,	8,000,000
Bank of Ireland,	3,706,000
Irish country banks,	2,565,000
Scotch banks,	3,041,000
	£31,312,000

In 1815 the Notes in circulation on Securities were :—

Bank of England,	£27,261,000
English country banks,	19,010,000
Scotch and Irish banks (estimated),	12,500,000
	£58,771,000

—*Ann. Reg.*, 1845, p. 204.

foreign wars or domestic deficiency of harvest to cause it to flow abroad, *it would all be brought to the Bank of England*, which would thus be forced to issue a corresponding amount of notes, and could only indemnify itself for the large amount of bullion thus kept in dead stock at its expense in its cellars, by forcing its business in every direction. Thus, to a certainty, an immense amount of notes would come to be issued by the Bank of England, and of course all other banks, at the very moment when it was least required, and most perilous in consequence of a large influx of the precious metal at any rate taking place into this country.

117. What was not foreseen.

If what was said in support of the measure was surprising, what was left unsaid was still more extraordinary. It was not said that the currency of the country, irrespective of that based on bullion, was now fixed at little more than half of what it had been thirty years before, when the population of the country was only two-thirds, and its transactions *not a third* of what they had since become.* It was not said that the arbitrary line of £31,380,000, then taken as the limit of the notes which would be issued on securities, was to be a *fixed line*, admitting of no increase, even although the transactions of the country, as was the case within the next ten years, should be *doubled*.† It was not said that, the whole currency beyond this line requiring to be based on bullion, if that bullion was drained away from the country by any cause, as a bad harvest at home, or a serious war abroad, the necessary result would be a sudden and violent con-

	Population.	Exports. Official Value.	Imports. Official Value.	Shipping. Tons.	Exports. Declared Value.
*1815	20,500,000	£42,875,996	£32,987,396	2,601,278	£42,875,991
1845	26,890,000	134,509,116	85,281,955	6,045,718	60,111,081

—*Parl. Returns.*

	Declared Value.	Computed Value.
† 1854 . . .	£97,184,725	£152,591,513
1855 . . .	95,688,085	143,660,335

—*Parl. Returns*, 1856.

CHAP. XLI.

1844.

traction of the currency and destruction of credit, at the very time when undertakings the most vast, speculations the most profitable, were in course of being carried into execution. It was not said that, as the *whole currency* of the country, whether based on securities or on bullion, was convertible at the pleasure of the holder into specie, this contraction would of necessity arise *long before* the Bank was approaching the end of its coffers, and when it still possessed the means, save by the operation of this law, of sustaining the commerce and credit of the country. It was not said that, in this way, the credit of every person in the kingdom would come to depend, not on the prudence of their undertakings, or even the amount of solid realised wealth they possessed, but *solely on the retention of gold by the Bank of England.* It was not said that this retention for any great length of time had been rendered impossible by the system of Free Trade, which was simultaneously introduced, which, of necessity, induced an immense balance of imports over exports into the richer country, which would then become, as Spain had long been, not the depositary of gold, but the channel of its transmission to other states. None of these things were said in the Legislature, though they were loudly said in the country. It will appear anon what were the consequences of this omission, and by what providential interference the nation was for a time rescued from the abyss into which it must otherwise have fallen.

118. Visit of the King of the French to England. Sept. 5.

An event, associated only with scenes of regal pomp and magnificence, but symptomatic of the altered relations of sovereigns and their subjects, occurred this year. This was the visit of Louis Philippe to Queen Victoria, in order to receive the investiture of the Order of the Garter, with which he was honoured on the 9th September. The ceremony was performed with great splendour in the Throne Room of Windsor Castle, in presence of the Queen and ten Companions of the Order, and a brilliant

Sept. 9.

assembly of the Ministry and Court. The few whom the magnificence of the spectacle permitted to reflect, recollected that this Order had been instituted by Edward III. after the battle of Cressy, and that its first Companions were the Black Prince and the other Paladins whose prowess proved so fatal to France at Poitiers and other fields of fame. How were times now changed! In answer to an address from the incorporation of Windsor, the French King observed: "The union of France is of great importance to both nations, but not from any wish of aggrandisement on the part of either. Our view should be peace, while we leave every other country in possession of those blessings which it has pleased Divine Providence to bestow upon them. France has nothing to ask of England, and England has nothing to ask of France, but cordial union." The 12th was the day fixed for his majesty's departure, but a violent storm prevented his crossing the Channel on that day, so that he was obliged to change his route, and proceed to Dover. On the route thither, a fresh disaster occurred, for when the train bearing the royal party reached the New Cross station, it was wrapped in flames, and the glare of the conflagration was reflected from the helmets of the escort. Those inclined to superstition drew sinister auguries from these incidents, so quickly succeeding the recent scenes of festivity and magnificence.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 112, 117, Chron.

119. Visit of the Emperor Nicholas. June 1.

If this visit was characteristic of the important and auspicious change which had taken place of late years in the relations of France and England, an event which occurred earlier in the year, though considered at the time as one connected only with amusement, was the harbinger of tragic and important events in the east of Europe. On the 1st June, the Emperor of Russia arrived in London, having been preceded by a few hours by the King of Saxony. He was received with her wonted courtesy and magnificence by the Queen, who gave him

CHAP. XLI. 1844.

a splendid series of entertainments in Windsor Palace. One of his majesty's first acts was to purchase £5000 worth of jewellery in London, which he distributed among the ladies of his acquaintance, whose smiles were liberally bestowed in return for such imperial courtesy; and the favour of the sporting world was not less won by a gift of a cup of uncommon splendour, to be annually run for at Ascot races. Every one who approached him was struck with the manly dignity of his figure, his noble and serene countenance, and the polished courtesy of his manners, which threw a lustre even over the stately halls of Windsor.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 61, 64, Chron.; Doubleday, Life of Peel, i. 381.

120. Political objects of the visit.

Unmarked amidst the blaze of magnificence which accompanied this imperial pageant, political objects of the highest importance were involved in the Emperor's visit. It was not for the purposes merely of popularity or amusement that the Czar left the shores of the Neva to approach those of the Thames. The object was to prepare the British Government, in secret and confidential conferences, for the designs of Russia upon the Turkish empire. It was intended to unfold the pitiable state of weakness to which the Turkish empire was reduced, and the absolute necessity of the principal powers of Europe concurring in the measures to be adopted in the event which might ere long occur of its entire dissolution. What the tenor of these conferences was is not yet fully known; but they may be inferred from what has since been published in regard to the proposals of the Czar to Sir H. Seymour, the English ambassador at St Petersburg. These were the cession of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bulgaria to Russia; of Servia, Bosnia, and the coast of the Adriatic to Austria; of Egypt and Cyprus to England; and the establishment of a power, under the protection of Russia, in Roumelia and Constantinople. Count Nesselrode's memorandum, published since the Crimean war began, leaves no doubt on this

point. What answer the British Government returned to these tempting proposals is not known; but the event has proved that it was not such as to disturb the diplomatic relations of the two countries, or prevent the Cabinet of St Petersburg, when it deemed the proper moment arrived, from proceeding of its own authority to carry them into execution.[1]

[1] Count Nesselrode's Memorandum; Doubleday, ii. 386.

CHAPTER XLII.

ENGLAND, FROM THE PASSING OF THE BANK CHARTER ACT IN 1844, TO THE FALL OF SIR R. PEEL'S MINISTRY IN JUNE 1846.

CHAP. XLII.

1844.

1. Public prosperity and the railway mania.

SIR R. PEEL frequently referred to the Bank Charter Act of 1844, and the adoption of Free Trade, as the main causes of the flood of prosperity which overspread the country during the two succeeding years; and there can be no doubt that he was so far right, that the immense increase in railway and other speculations which then took place is in a great degree to be ascribed to the facilities for carrying them on which that Act afforded. The Bank, now laid in chains by Government, had but one thing to do, and that was, to attend closely to the state of the exchanges and the stock of bullion in its coffers, to expand its issues when the former were favourable, the latter large; to contract them when the reverse took place. Circumstances, immediately after the passing of the Act, were eminently favourable to the retention of bullion. The supplies from South America, in consequence of the cessation of the desolating war of independence, had become much more abundant, and the drain, from the fineness of the harvests, had become very inconsiderable. The produce of gold in Russia had now become so considerable* as to exercise a sensible influence on

* PRODUCE OF GOLD IN RUSSIA.

1837,	£900,000	1842,	£1,848,000
1838,	1,004,000	1843,	2,635,000
1839,	1,003,000	1844,	2,730,000
1840,	1,125,000	1845,	2,792,000
1841,	1,316,000	1846,	3,414,000

—*Parl. Papers*, Dec. 3, 1847; TOOKE'S *History of Prices*, v. 537.

the money market. The import of wheat in the years 1843, 1844, and 1845, was very small; in the latter of these years, it was only 313,000 quarters.* The consequence was, that the Bank coffers were overflowing, and Sir R. Peel boasted, in the pride of his heart, as already mentioned in noticing the Scotch Banking Act in 1845, that it had bullion to the amount of £15,842,000. The necessary effect of this state of things, according to the existing law, was a very great issue of bank-notes by that establishment, which was obliged to give them for all the gold brought to its doors, and of course a corresponding increase in the issue of all other banks, which are all entirely regulated by the proceedings of the Bank of England. During the last half of 1844 and the next two years, the average bullion in the Bank was from £15,000,000 to £16,000,000, and the paper in circulation from £21,000,000 to £23,300,000. The entire circulation of the empire during these years was from £40,000,000 to £42,000,000, while the gold and silver was about £30,000,000. True to the principle of the Bank Charter Act, the Bank Directors no sooner perceived this favourable state of things than they lowered the rate of their discount from 4 to 2½ per cent; and it did not exceed 3½ per cent till the beginning of 1847,[1] † when the monetary crisis was commencing which termi-

[1] Tooke, v. 563, 565; Ann. Reg. 1845, 1, 3; Mart. ii. 627, 629; Doubleday, ii. 387, 388.

* Imports of Wheat into Great Britain.

Years.	Quarters.	Years.	Quarters.
1842, . .	2,997,302	1844, . .	1,021,245
1843, . .	982,287	1845, . .	313,245

—Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, p. 140, 3d edit.

† Rates of Discount charged at the Bank, and Bullion in Circulation.

	Rate of Interest.	Bullion.	Bills under Discount.	Paper out.
1844—Sept. 5,	2½	£15,210,000	£7,280,000	£21,210,000
1845—Oct. 16,	3	14,190,000	13,500,000	23,380,000
„ —Nov. 6,	3½	13,720,000	13,620,000	22,890,000
1846—Aug. 27,	3	16,360,000	11,840,000	21,310,000

—Tooke *On Prices*, v. 565.

CHAP. XLII. 1844.

nated so fatally in the close of that year. It was impossible that so great a fall in the rate of discount, and so great an increase in the circulating medium, could take place without a corresponding rise of prices in everything except food, which was kept down by the fine harvests; the state of things of all others most favourable to commercial enterprise and speculation of every kind.

2. The Railway Mania.

The first effect of this state of things, as auspicious in the outset as it was perilous in the end, was a vast increase in railway speculation, and the growth of what has been not inaptly called the RAILWAY MANIA. It was during the years 1844, 1845, and 1846 that this system received its full development, and it was then pushed to a degree of extravagance which would not be credited by future times if not attested by a host of contemporary witnesses, and evinced by lasting effects upon the face and fortunes of the country. Compared with the fever which then seized the public mind, and the magnitude of the speculations in consequence set on foot, the famous South Sea Bubble, and the corresponding fervour of England in 1824-25 and 1836-37, sink into insignificance. The progressive rise in the price of the chief articles of commerce was such as to render speculation of every kind for a considerable time a source of profit, and to diminish to an extraordinary degree the unfortunate ones which terminated in bankruptcy. The result of this, as usual, was, that people thought that the prosperity which had now set in would never cease; that the rise of prices, which had proved so profitable to many, would continue for ever. It must be confessed, that for a considerable time appearances seemed to justify the anticipation. The few fortunate speculators who set on foot some of the favourite lines, soon sold their shares at such prices as in a few days enabled them to realise large fortunes.[1] The knowledge of this so increased the public anxiety to share in these profit-

[1] Mart. ii. 628; Ann. Reg. 1845, 2, 3; Doubleday, ii. 388.

able investments, that these shares rose every day higher, and scarcely any one who bought had not an opportunity of selling in a few days to advantage. Such was the effect of this, that in a short time the nation seemed to have lost its senses.

3. Effects of the mania on society.

The effect of this universal mania appeared in a thousand different ways, some of which, it must be confessed, exhibited the national character in no very favourable colours. The passion for gain, now thoroughly awakened, seized upon all classes, pervaded both sexes, swept away all understandings. The grave and the gay, the old and the young, the studious and the volatile, were alike involved in the vortex. The few who ventured to withstand the torrent, and to suggest that the currency and capital of the country were alike inadequate to bear the strain which would soon be brought upon them, were put aside as mere alarmists, whose opinions were entitled to no consideration. It was said the money never left the country, that it only circulated from hand to hand with more rapidity, and that there was enough and to spare. Every one concerned, however remotely, in the great work of forming the network of railways which was to overspread the country, was worked to death, so great was the universal anxiety to get the lines forward. Surveyors with theodolites and chains were incessantly travelling the country in every direction; and when the proprietor refused his consent to their entry, it was stealthily obtained at night, or openly asserted in daylight by large bodies of men. Nothing could resist the universal mania. Park-walls were to be perforated, shady dells penetrated, gardens pierced through, stately mansions levelled with the ground, villages ruined, streets effaced, to make way for these gigantic precursors of human improvement. As the season passed on, and the 30th November, the last day for lodging plans with the Board of Trade, approached, the pressure and excite-

CHAP. XLII.

1844.

ment became unparalleled. Lithographers by hundreds were brought over from Belgium and France to aid in making the plans; the engineers and their clerks sat up all night, and several of them in two years made large fortunes. On the evening of the closing day the doors of the Board of Trade were besieged by a clamorous crowd contending for admission, as at the pit doors of the opera when a popular actress is to perform: above six hundred plans were thrust in before the doors closed at midnight on 30th November 1845. The capital required for their construction was £270,950,000, and above £23,000,000 required to be deposited before the Acts could be applied for![1]

[1] Mart. ii. 630, 631; Doubleday, ii. 388, 389; Personal knowledge; Ann. Reg. 1845, Chron. 177.

4. Effects on the public mind.

It may easily be conceived that so prodigious and universal a ferment in society did not take place without unhinging in a great degree the public mind, and bringing forward in the most dangerous way many of the worst qualities of human nature. The same effects on all classes which had been observed in France during the Mississippi Bubble, reappeared in Great Britain, but on a much greater scale, and pervading more universally all gradations of society. The passion for gain, deemed by all to be within their reach, seized upon all classes. Not a doubt was entertained, save by the thinking few, who were derided as alarmists and croakers, of the possibility, nay certainty, of reaching the goal; the only point was, who was to be first in the race? All classes joined in it: country clergymen and curates hastened to invest the savings of their scanty incomes in the golden investments; traders and shopkeepers in towns almost universally expended their all in similar undertakings; servants, both in affluent and humble families, were to be seen on all sides crowding to the agents' offices in the nearest towns, to throw their little savings into the crucible from whence a golden image was expected to start forth. It was painful to behold the extent of the delusion, mournful to contemplate its certain consequences. No class, not

even the very highest, was exempt from it. Ladies of rank and fashion hastened from their splendid West End mansions into the City to besiege the doors of the fortunate speculators, whose abodes were deemed a certain entrance to fabled wealth; the palaces of the exclusives were thrown open to vulgar manners and grotesque habits, to facilitate an entrance into these magicians' dens. CHAP. XLII. 1845.

5. Its immediate benefits to some classes.

Doubtless some classes gained, and that enormously, by this universal insanity. The legislatorial attorneys, the engineers in chief employment, and the surveyors, rapidly made fortunes. It must be confessed they gave the public something very tempting in appearance, at least, for their money. There was not a line proposed that was not supported by the opinion of professional men of the highest character, to the effect that at least *ten per cent*, probably much more, would be the certain returns to the fortunate shareholders. Experience ere long proved that by doubling the estimated costs, and halving the estimated profits, a much nearer approximation to the truth would be obtained. Under the influence of such powerful excitements it may be believed that, without imputing to any one deliberate and intentional falsehood, great exaggeration prevailed; most erroneous views were successfully palmed off upon the committees, and a vast amount of solid wealth was for ever thrown away, to the utter ruin of great numbers of innocent persons. These truths were ere long too clearly demonstrated by the result. It was computed that no less than £16,000,000 was expended in surveys, legislation, or litigation connected with the bills got up during the railway mania before they got through Parliament; of the £300,000,000 in round numbers which the lines were computed to cost, nearly a third has never paid anything in the shape of dividend, and on the remaining two-thirds the net receipts,[1] after deducting the

[1] Porter, 3d edit., 324, 326; Mart. ii. 631; Doubleday, ii. 388, 389.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

working expenses, would not on an average exceed 3 per cent.*

6. Great effect of these speculations in the country.

It would be well if the historian had only to record the immediate losses which arose to the parties concerned in them from these gigantic undertakings. But unfortunately the evil did not stop here; but, on the contrary, has impressed its mark in a lasting way on the national character and on the estimation in which the Legislature is held. From the extravagant speculations and unbounded gains and losses of the years during which the mania lasted, may be dated a great change, and

* The Sums authorised to be expended by Acts of Parliament on Railways in the United Kingdom were as follows in the undermentioned years:—

1843,	£3,861,285	1847,	£40,397,395
1844,	17,870,361	1848,	14,620,471
1845,	60,824,088	1849,	3,155,332
1846,	162,026,224	In 7 years,	£302,755,221

The entire Receipts from and numbers of travellers on these lines, from which nearly one-half required to be deducted for working expenses, were,—

Years.	Gross Receipts.	Number of Passengers.
1845,	£6,209,714	33,791,253
1846,	7,565,569	43,790,793
1847,	8,510,886	51,352,163
1848,	9,993,532	57,965,070
1849,	11,200,901	60,398,159

The number of Lines completed in these railways was in 1850,—

	Miles.
England,	4656
Scotland,	846
Ireland,	494
	5996

The Parliamentary Expenses incurred in getting some of the principal of these lines were,—

Great Western,	£89,197	London & S. Western,	£41,467
London and Birmingham,	72,868	Manchester and Leeds,	49,166
Northern and Eastern,	74,166	Sheffield and Manchester,	31,473
South-Eastern,	83,222	Glasgow and Greenock,	23,181
Eastern Counties,	39,171	North Midland,	41,349

These figures exhibit only the expenses incurred by the *promoters* of the bills, without those incurred by those who *opposed* them, which were often of still larger amount.—*Parl. Report*, July 10, 1850; PORTER, 326, 334, 3d edit.

one materially for the worse, in the mercantile character of the country. The old English merchant, cautious, upright, honourable, lavish in his charities, economical in his household, liberal to others, saving upon himself, has disappeared. "Namque avaritia fidem, probitatem ceterasque artis bonas subvortit; pro his superbiam, crudelitatem, Deos negligere, *omnia venalia habere* edocuit. Hæc primo paullatim crescere, interdum vindicari. Post, ubi contagio quasi pestilentia invasit civitas immutata."[1] In the joint-stock companies which succeeded the individual direction of the old English merchant, facilities to fraud were multiplied, inducements to probity taken away. Forgery and embezzlement hoped for evasion in the careless management of the many; honesty and integrity lost their appropriate reward by their fruits being shared by numbers. Every species of fraud —false balance-sheets, false dividends, cooked accounts— was perpetrated, in some cases with long-continued concealment and immense profits. When at length the perpetrators of the iniquity had in general escaped, aware of what was coming, they had in time disposed of their shares to the widow and the orphan, who, deceived by their representations, bore the penalty of their sins. The *transferable* nature of the shares in those public companies added immensely to the facilities of fraud, for the shares could be disposed of before the fraud was discovered. Unfortunately the Legislature itself did not in the general whirl escape, at least in general estimation, unscathed; and the railway Committees, pressed with business, and distracted by opposite opinions from witnesses of equal respectability and skill, gave such various and contradictory decisions, that the public confidence in the wisdom and disinterestedness of their legislation was, for the time at least, seriously impaired.

[1] Sal. Cat. § 10.

Another consequence of a very curious and unexpected kind arose from the rise and extraordinary extension of

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

7. Division in the landed interest occasioned by the railway mania.

railway speculation in Great Britain at this time, and this was the division on a vital question which it occasioned in the landed interest. The first step taken by every railway company, when any new line was to be set on foot, was to endeavour to conciliate the landed proprietors through whose estates it was to pass, and this they did by offering them shares of the new undertaking, and ample sums in name of damages for the ground taken. If neither bait took, and a squire proved obdurate, he generally got such ample damages from the juries, who deemed the railway funds inexhaustible, as entirely opened his eyes and altered his views as to the comparative merit of the railway and landed interest. In this way a most important object was gained, attended with decisive effects in the great contest which immediately after ensued. The landed interest, hitherto so united, was *divided;* a considerable portion of it came to regard its interests as more identified with the railways—that is, the commercial interest—rather than with the fields—that is, the agricultural. It was the constant argument of the Anti-Corn-Law League that the repeal of the laws protecting agriculture would immensely augment the internal traffic of the country, and that between the effects of large quantities of grain coming in, and still larger of minerals and manufactures going out, an unlimited amount of carriage on the railways might with confidence be anticipated. There can be no question that these views were, in fact, at least well founded; and being presented to a generation heated by the railway mania, and the very persons most likely in the first instance to profit by it, they proved with many landed proprietors extremely serviceable. Their interests as claimants on railways or owners of their shares overbalanced their interests as proprietors of the soil. Thus at the very time when the universal distress arising from five bad seasons in succession had engendered a powerful league, which was making unheard-of efforts to

abolish every remnant of protection to agriculture, an element to seduction was thrown among its defenders, which caused many of them at the decisive moment to disappear from the ranks in which they had hitherto been found.

8. Good effects of the railway mania on the labouring classes.

The immediate effect of the vast expenditure of capital upon domestic undertakings, which the railway mania occasioned, was immense. The demand for labourers was such, that even the multitudes of workmen who came over from the neighbouring island, to the number at one time of nearly a million, were unable to satisfy it. Wages of all kinds rose to nearly double their former amount. Common day-labourers, instead of eighteen pence, were getting half-a-crown and three shillings a-day; colliers and iron-miners six or seven shillings, instead of three shillings and sixpence or four shillings.* The price of all the materials used in railways, especially iron, rose to an extravagant height; in December 1846 it was at £12 a ton, more than double its former price. The immense sums circulated in wages augmented to a very great

* The following figures, quoted by Sir R. Peel, in his address to the electors of Tamworth, prove the great effect of the railway expenditure in ameliorating the condition and enlarging the consumption of the people :—

Articles Consumed.		1841.	1846.
Cocoa,	lb.	1,930,764	2,962,327
Coffee,	do.	28,420,980	36,781,391
Currants,	cwt.	190,071	359,315
Rice,	do.	245,887	466,961
Pepper,	lb.	2,750,790	3,297,431
Sugar,	cwt.	4,065,971	5,231,845
Molasses,	do.	402,422	582,665
Tea,	lb.	36,681,877	46,728,208
Tobacco and Snuff,	do.	22,308,385	27,001,908
Brandy,	gallons.	1,165,137	1,515,954
Geneva,	do.	15,404	40,211
British Spirits,	do.	20,642,333	23,122,581
Malt charged with duty,	bushels,	36,164,446	41,979,000

—Sir R. Peel to Electors of Tamworth, July 1847.—*Peel's Memoirs*, ii. p. 104.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

degree the consumption of butcher-meat, beer, tea, sugar, and all articles of wearing apparel, which diffused prosperity through the dealers in these articles. The shuttle and the hammer rang merrily; joy and gladness for a brief space pervaded the land. This state of general prosperity was attended, as is always the case, with one result, at which every friend of mankind must rejoice, a sensible diminution of crime.* This is generally, it may be said always, the consequence of a state of prosperity and a general increase in the demand for labour. It arises in some degree, without doubt, from the lessening of the number of those unhappy persons who are forced by actual want and suffering into the commission of crime. But in many more instances it is to be ascribed to the giving the working classes, generally speaking, *full occupation*; a more effectual antidote against crime, in all ranks of society, than any other which human wisdom has ever yet devised.[1]

[1] Porter, 646, 658; Tooke on Prices, 418.

9. Effects of the railway system on commerce and manufactures.

In one respect the general adoption of the railway system in the British Islands has proved a lasting benefit, especially to the commercial and manufacturing classes. It has in a manner brought the different workshops of the empire together, and enabled each to obtain in an incredibly short space of time, and at a comparatively trifling expense, what it requires from the other. Immense is the advantage thence accruing to all the branches of manufacture; so great, indeed, as to have lengthened the start, already sufficiently great, which Great Britain had

* Committals in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Years.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1842.	31,309	4,189	21,186
1843.	29,591	3,615	20,126
1844.	26,542	3,575	19,448
1845.	24,303	3,537	16,696
1846.	25,107	4,069	18,492

—Porter, pp. 646, 658, 668.

acquired over other nations in these respects. To the agriculturists also, especially in distant localities, it has proved a very great benefit, by bringing them in a manner much nearer their principal markets, and enabling butcher-meat and dairy produce of every kind to be brought even from the most distant places to the metropolis and great towns; while the inhabitants there have been equally benefited, by the lessened price at which these articles can be purchased. In one respect, however, it has been attended by a consequence by no means equally satisfactory, and which has already come to exercise an important influence upon the political balance and future destinies of the State. It has enormously increased the inhabitants and wealth, and in a proportional degree augmented the political preponderance, of the great towns. The metropolis and the great commercial and manufacturing towns having become so easy of access, the concourse of the inhabitants of the country to the vast emporiums of industry, wealth, and pleasure, has been increased to an unprecedented degree. The chief purchases, even by the inhabitants of the most distant counties, are now made in them. Their wealth and population in consequence are rapidly augmenting, while the small towns are declining, and in many of the rural districts the numbers of the people are rapidly diminishing. London is now adding 60,000 souls annually to its numbers; Glasgow, Liverpool, and Manchester from 10,000 to 12,000 each; while from the agricultural districts of Ireland 2,000,000 human beings have emigrated during the last twelve years. This is a most serious consideration, for it augments the resemblance, in many respects so close, between the state and prospects of society in the British Islands, and that which characterised Italy and Greece in the declining days of the Roman Empire.

In one respect the railway system has bequeathed a great and enduring benefit to the species, which will sur-

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

10. Beneficial effect of the railway system on the working classes.

vive the empire which gave it birth. It has brought to the inhabitants of the towns the means of going to the country, and to the inhabitants of the country the means of going into the towns. "Railways," says Miss Martineau, "were to run not only along the margin of the southern part of the island, and round the margin of the misty Scottish mountains, but through the vale in which Furness Abbey had hitherto stood shrouded, and among old cathedrals, of which the traveller might see half-a-dozen in a day. It was on Easter Monday 1844 that excursion trips with return tickets were first heard of. Here began the benefits of cheap pleasure-trips to the hard workers of the nation. The process had begun from which incalculable blessings were to accrue to the mind, morals, and manners of the people. From this time the exclusive class was to meet the humbler classes face to face. The peer, and the manufacturer, and the farmer, were henceforth to meet and talk in the railway carriage, and have a chance of understanding each other. The proud were to part with some of their prejudice, and the ignorant with some of their ignorance; and other walls of partition than park enclosures were to be thrown down. The operative was to see new sights hitherto quite out of his reach—the ocean, the mountain, the lake, and old ruins, and new inventions; and the London artisan was ere long to live within sight of trees and green fields, and yet go to his work every day. As unwholesome streets in London were pulled down, hamlets were to arise at a little distance in the country, from which the humbler classes could go and return to their daily labour in the centre of the town. The diet of millions was to be improved, fish and foreign fruits being conveyed from the town into the country, and milk, butter, and vegetables, fresh from the country, into the towns.[1] Everybody's wants were to become known by the general communication about to be

[1] Mart. ii. 628, 629.

established, and the supply was to reach the want and the wish. The change was vast, the prospect magnificent; but this change, like every other, had to pass at its outset through a wilderness of difficulties." [1]

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

11. Bill passes reducing railway deposits to a half.

It can hardly be supposed that a statesman so experienced as Sir R. Peel was really deceived by the flattering and fallacious appearances which the effects of the railway mania at first exhibited, or that he imagined present prospects were to be perpetual. Certain it is, however, that he acted as if he believed this really was to be the case. Carried away by the tumult of activity and temporary prosperity which pervaded the country, he did everything in his power, both as an individual and the head of the Government, to swell the mania in which it originated. By the existing rules of Parliament, a tenth of the estimated expense of every railway required to be deposited before the bill for promoting it was introduced. A committee was appointed to consider the subject in 1844, and it recommended that the deposit-money should be reduced a half, or to a twentieth, which was immediately made the foundation of a bill which obtained the sanction of Parliament in the same session. To this great concession in favour of speculation, the vast increase in it which so soon after took place, and the unbounded effects which thence arose, is in a great measure to be ascribed. The general fervour on the subject was ere long still farther inflamed by the imposing ceremony which took place at the commencement of the Trent Valley Railway, when Sir R. Peel in person, with a silver trowel, turned up the first sod, which was followed by the most enthusiastic speeches on the unbounded prospects which these undertakings were to open to the country.[1]

[1] Doubleday, ii. 390; Parl. Deb. lxxiii. 516, 519; Ann. Reg. 1845, 178; Mart. ii. 629.

To appreciate the immense effect this reduction in the sums required as deposits to be paid had in stimulating these extraordinary undertakings, it is only necessary

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

12. Its vast effect in stimulating these undertakings.

to refer to the official account of the railways, for which plans were deposited in terms of the Act of Parliament up to the 31st December 1845. The number of these lines for which plans were lodged was, in 1844, 248 ; but in 1845 it had risen to the enormous amount of 815 ! The sums deposited on the lines in the first year were £6,432,155, and the estimated sums to complete the undertakings were £44,927,000. In the succeeding year, however, the capital required to be paid on deposits for new projects was £59,136,000 ; the sum of £60,927,000 had been already expended on the lines in the course of execution; and the liabilities connected with the new projects, after deducting the deposits paid, amounted to the enormous and almost fabulous sum of £590,447,000 ! It is difficult to say to what state the country would have been reduced if these wild speculations had all been carried into execution ; and nothing can illustrate so strongly the extreme peril of the course on which Government had now adventured, in first passing a Bank Charter Act, which in effect compelled the Bank, and all other banks, to lower their discounts to 3 per cent, and then a Railway Act, which reduced the sums required to be paid in deposit on the projected lines from 10 to 5 per cent.[1]

[1] Official Table, Ann. Reg. 1845, 178, Chron.

13. Flourishing state of trade and the revenue.

Like many other rash and imprudent courses of conduct, however fraught with lasting and perilous consequences, the measures of Government at this period were attended by immediate and flattering benefits. The path which led directly over the abyss was in the outset strewed with flowers. The prosperous condition of all the great interests in the country was unequivocally evinced in the returns of its trade, manufactures, shipping, and revenue. The imports between 1842 and 1847 rose from £65,000,000 to £90,000,000 ; and the exports from £47,000,000 to £58,000,000. The revenue, notwithstanding a reduction of taxation in these five years

of about £6,000,000, which more than compensated the income-tax, had advanced from £48,500,000 to £51,500,000. The shipping in the same period rose from 4,600,000 tons to above 7,000,000 tons, indicating an increase of at least fifty per cent in the bulk and weight of the exports and imports of the country. All this took place not only without any increase, but with an extraordinary diminution, in our imports of food, which, till the disastrous years 1846 and 1847, which witnessed the Irish famine, had sunk to little more than 300,000 quarters of wheat a-year! It must be confessed that this extraordinary flood of prosperity, enduring for five years immediately succeeding a corresponding period of unmitigated adversity which had preceded it, afforded a just subject of congratulation to the Prime Minister, and seemed to warrant the confidence of the country in a statesman whose magic wand had so quickly converted desolation and ruin into riches and prosperity.*

14. Sir R. Peel's favourable financial statement.

Sir R. Peel made an adroit use of the flood of prosperity which, from a temporary cause, was thus poured upon the country, to carry out to a much greater extent than he had hitherto done the new commercial policy with which he conceived the well-being of the country was indissolubly wound up. He was enabled to meet the Parliament of 1845 in the most triumphant manner. The wisdom of his policy seemed to be established, beyond

* EXPORTS, IMPORTS, AND REVENUE OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND SHIPPING AND POOR-RATES OF ENGLAND, FROM 1842 TO 1847, BOTH INCLUDED.

Years.	Exports—Declared Value.	Imports—Computed Value.	Revenue.	Shipping—Tons.	Poor-Rates—England.	Number of Paupers—England.
1842	£47,381,023	£65,204,729	£48,580,026	4,627,446	£4,912,498	1,427,187
1843	52,278,449	70,003,353	52,582,847	4,977,266	5,208,027	1.539,490
1844	58,584,292	85,441,555	54,063,754	5,297,168	4,976,093	1,477,561
1845	60,111,081	85,281,954	53,060,354	6,031,587	5,039,703	1,470,970
1846	57,786,875	75,953,875	53,790,138	6,314,571	4,954,204	1,332,089
1847	58,842,377	90,921,866	51,546,265	7,083,163	5,298,787	1,721,356

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, pp. 356, 399, 475, 94, 90.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

the possibility of doubt, by the result. Instead of the woeful tale of a deficit, which under the administration of his predecessors had so often sickened the heart of the nation, he was to come forward with the glad tidings of a large surplus. Supposing, he said, the property-tax to be continued, the revenue in the year ending 5th April 1846 would amount to £53,700,000, and the expenditure would be only £49,000,000, even after taking into account an increase of £1,000,000 for the service of the navy, which he most wisely proposed. But as £600,000 of this surplus consisted of payments from China, which would only continue a year more, he would take the income at £53,100,000, leaving a surplus of £3,400,000 when the additional estimates for the navy were taken into consideration.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1845, 24; Parl. Deb. lxxvii. 455, 497.

15. Continuance of the Income-tax, and repeal of more indirect taxes.

"I now approach," said Sir Robert, "the most important question of all, which is, how we are to dispose of this surplus. I propose to do so by *continuing the income-tax, and making a great reduction in the duties on consumption.* I would not have proposed this if I had not felt the strongest persuasion that by continuing the income-tax it will be in the power of the House to make arrangements with respect to taxation, which will be the foundation of great future *commercial* prosperity, and which will add materially to the comforts of those who are called upon to contribute to it. In considering the taxes on consumption, which are to be reduced, the points to be taken into view are the weight of the taxes which enter into the price of articles of general consumption, those which press most heavily on the raw materials which constitute the staple manufactures of the country, the comparative expense incurred in their collection, and which taxes, if removed, would give most scope to the commercial enterprise of the country. These are the objects which Government have had in view, in the selection of taxes for reduction, which I am about to propose. I do not propose to maintain any *considerable*

surplus of income over expenditure; but in the conviction that the House will at all events maintain public credit, I shall propose a reduction of certain duties which are rather onerous than productive. First, to begin with sugar, I propose to lower the duty on brown muscovado from 25s. 3d. to 14s. On East India sugar of the same description, the duty to be 18s. 8d., and on free-labour foreign sugar 23s. 3d. The effect of these changes will be, I think, to lower the price of sugar 1½d. a pound at a cost to the revenue of £1,300,000 a-year. The export duty on coals I propose to take away altogether at a cost of £120,000. On the raw materials employed in manufactures, 813 in number, I propose to remove altogether the duty on 430, which will get rid of a vast number of troublesome accounts, and no small amount of expense; and release altogether from duty the important raw materials of silk, hemp, flax, certain kinds of yarns, furniture woods, animal and vegetable manures, and a great variety of lesser articles. The entire loss to the Treasury from these reductions will be only £320,000, and the relief to the country immense. The duty on cotton wool is to be entirely taken off, at a loss of £680,000 to the Exchequer. The duty on glass is from 200 to 300 per cent on the cost of the manufactured article, a burden which renders competition impossible with the manufacturers of France, Belgium, and Bohemia. I propose to take this tax off altogether, which will occasion a loss to the revenue of £642,000. These reductions taken together amount to £3,338,000, being within a trifle of the surplus of £3,409,000 with which the House has to deal. In consideration of these reductions, and of the benefit they will confer upon the country, I propose the farther continuance, for the limited period of three years, of the income-tax." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxvii. 465, 497; Ann. Reg. 1845, 24, 26.

On the other hand it was contended by Mr Baring: "Sir R. Peel originally demanded the income-tax for three years as a means of temporarily restoring the

CHAP. XLII. 1845. 16. Mr Baring's objection to it.

revenue, upon the promise that the tax, when this had been effected, was to be removed; but what is the state of the finances now? On the face of his own estimate the income in the ensuing year, if you deduct from it the income-tax and the Chinese payments, is only £47,900,000, and the expenditure £49,700,000, leaving a deficiency on the revenue, as it stood before it was laid on, of £1,800,000. This is a circumstance well worthy of consideration. You imposed the income-tax to close a deficiency and compensate a large reduction of indirect taxation, and after a trial of three years in a period of profound and universal peace, and when the public revenues during all that time have been largely benefited by the Chinese payments, the income has not recovered itself, and but for that tax the nation would be still in an annual deficiency of nearly £2,000,000. Your boasted surplus is entirely made up of the income-tax; and, markworthy circumstance, the effect of the large repeal of the indirect taxes made three years ago has not been, as was predicted, to restore the revenue in other quarters, but were it not for the direct income-tax the Exchequer would still be in a state of lamentable deficiency. Sir R. Peel has calculated the surplus, even with the income-tax kept on, at only £90,000; and that excess, small as it is, rests entirely upon the supposition of an increased consumption which was by no means sure of being realised. We are told that the selection of articles on which the tax is to be remitted has been made on the principle of being able to take off the entire income-tax at the end of three more years; but in proceeding on that supposition it is much to be feared he is repeating again the too sanguine anticipations of 'Prosperity Robinson,' who took off taxes to the amount of three or four millions, expecting that in three years the revenue would in consequence increase five millions.

"The facts by no means warrant these expectations.

Nothing is so fallacious in principle, or has been so often disproved in practice, as the assertion now so often repeated, that the only way to insure an increase of the revenue is to lower the duties. The contrary has been decisively established by experience; scarcely an instance is to be found in our annals of a considerable remission of taxation being followed by such an increase of consumption as compensated the loss to the revenue. In 1816 the revenue was £71,900,000; taxes were taken off to the amount of £17,500,000; and in 1819 the revenue was only £52,155,000, showing a difference of £19,745,000; and proving that the other branches of the revenue, so far from having improved by this great reduction of taxes, had actually fallen off in the next three years by £2,000,000, even after deducting from the deficiency the whole amount of the taxes remitted. In the five years ending in 1826 the taxes remitted were £13,000,000, and the revenue was not restored by about £4,000,000. In the three years ending in 1829 the taxes taken off were £9,600,000; but even in 1839 the revenue had not recovered the loss by £4,600,000. Between 1815 and 1830 the taxes taken off were £33,000,000; and the loss to the revenue was £22,000,000. In the face of these facts, so uniform and so long continued, what ground is there for believing that the effect of the present remission of taxes will be different, or that increased consumption will now for the first time follow diminished duties? It is too evident that the expectation is entirely illusory; increased consumption will never compensate seriously-diminished indirect taxation, and if the House agrees to remit the duties on consumption now proposed for reduction, it is equivalent to consenting for ever to what he has himself called 'the dire scourge of direct taxation.'"[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxvii. 551, 554; Ann. Reg. 1845, 38, 39.

So entirely were the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in harmony with the ideas of the great majority

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

18. The bill is carried by a large majority. Feb. 18.

of the House that the bill passed, with very little opposition, by a majority of 208, the numbers being 263 to 55. This great majority was obtained by the junction of nearly the whole Liberal party with the adherents of Administration, leaving a small minority of decided Protectionists and Radicals alone in opposition. But although this financial project thus excited very little discussion, and was carried by so large a majority, yet it was a most unfortunate step in the financial history of Great Britain, and was the first decided announcement of the new commercial and financial system which was thereafter for a considerable period to govern the Legislature of the country.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxvii. 634; Ann. Reg. 1845, 38.

19. Reflections on this measure.

Three things eminently descriptive of the vast alteration in the ideas of men, and the ruling principles of statesmen, are particularly worthy of observation in this debate and decision of the House. The first is, that by common consent the income-tax was now continued for three years longer, when not only had all the circumstances stated in justification of its first imposition ceased to exist, but the situation of the nation was the reverse. In 1842 the news had just been received of an unparalleled disaster in Affghanistan; an expensive war was raging in China; and Government at home had to contend with a yawning deficit yearly increasing, which at length had reached the formidable amount of £3,500,000 a-year. Now, the disaster in Affghanistan had been effaced by a glorious triumph; the war in China had ceased, and its expenses been succeeded by a large tribute, which had considerably tended to right the British finances; profound peace prevailed in every part of the world; and so far from a deficit of £3,500,000 a-year existing, there was a surplus in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of exactly that amount. Yet the income-tax was renewed without any abatement! The second is, that the large surplus which, for the first time since

1837, the public finances exhibited, was applied, *not* to the reduction of the income or other *direct* taxes, but of a variety of indirect taxes, considered as oppressive to the springs of industry, or as entering largely into the price of articles of general consumption. The third was, that no surplus whatever was reserved for the liquidation of the National Debt, the interest being provided for, and no more. The times were far distant from those when the House of Commons pledged itself, by solemn protestations in 1819, never, under any circumstances, to suffer the Sinking Fund to sink below £5,000,000. A new system of finance directly opposed to the former had been adopted, which worked as great a change in our national prospects as free trade did in our commercial; and that system consisted in the substitution of direct for indirect taxation, and the entire abandonment of the Sinking Fund.

20. Causes of this great change.

The Sinking Fund had been so long ignored, in consequence of its almost constant disappearance, since the monetary system of 1819 was introduced. The National Debt, which in 1819 was £794,980,480, in 1844 was still £771,069,858—showing a diminution of only £23,000,000 in twenty-five years. In the twenty-two years ending with 1850, the sum paid off was only £16,547,000.[1] The nation had become accustomed to regard the reduction of the National Debt as, practically speaking, an impossibility; and therefore it was not surprising that the entire devotion of the surplus to the reduction of taxation by Sir R. Peel excited very little attention. But it is not so apparent how they so quietly submitted, in a period of profound peace and unexampled prosperity, to a substitution of a heavy direct for a comparatively light indirect taxation, and the reimposition of a burden against which the people had risen as one man at the close of the French war. This was no doubt in a great degree owing to the fact, that the income-tax, as now restored, reached incomes only above £150 a-year,

[1] Porter's Progress of Nation 482.

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

whereas the former came down to £50, and the nation generally had no objection to a heavy load of exclusive taxation being laid on a body of proprietors not numbering in all two hundred thousand persons. Add to this, that the mercantile class, taken as a body, always advocate direct in preference to indirect taxation, for the simple reason that they can easily evade it, which the landholders cannot, and they hope that the diminution of indirect taxes will augment their sales and increase their profits. But the main reason why at this juncture the substitution of direct for indirect taxation to so considerable an extent was not seriously objected to was, that the effect of the cheapening system introduced in 1819, and rigidly carried out by subsequent Acts, had been to occasion so great a fall in the price of the articles of commerce, and the consequent incomes of the persons dealing in them, that a corresponding diminution in the final burdens attaching to them had become, in a manner, a matter of necessity. Thus the monetary system of Sir R. Peel was the immediate cause of the extinction of the Sinking Fund, the fearful reduction in the military and naval armaments of the State, the abandonment of protection, and introduction of free trade in its room, and the re-imposition of the income-tax, as a permanent burden upon the nation—effects so great and momentous as amply to vindicate the prominent place assigned to that system among the great springs of social change in those islands in the first half of the nineteenth century.

21. Increase in Irish agrarian crime.

While Great Britain was thus engaged in the prosecution of changes consequent on the extension of the currency during the influx of gold under the Bank Charter Act, and the effects of the alterations were appearing in an entire change in the financial and commercial policy of the State, Ireland was fast relapsing into the state of savage barbarism from which it had been temporarily extricated by the influence of O'Connell and the preaching of Father Mathew. During the influence of the

former the passions of the people had been kept enchained as by the arms of a mighty enchanter, in order to hurl them, like the force of a well-disciplined army, with accumulated force against the Government. Under the enthusiasm awakened by the latter, the funds, which hitherto had been wasted in riot and intoxication, were mainly directed to the formation and support of a fund destined to effect the repeal of the Union, and the severance of Ireland from the dominion of Great Britain. But although during particular moments of fervour such political or religious passions may prevail over the natural wants and instincts of our nature, no reliance can be placed on their exercising any lasting sway over mankind. The period of reaction speedily arrives, and when it does, the effects of the long pent-up passions, like the ravages of a restrained flood, are only the greater from the duration of the previous coercion. This truth was strikingly evinced in Ireland at this period; for the serious crimes for which persons were committed in 1845 were only 16,696, while in 1846 they had risen to 18,492, and in 1847, when the famine had begun, to 31,209.[1]

[f] Porter, 696.

22. Grant to secular colleges.

Sir R. Peel was deeply affected by the accounts which reached him from all quarters of the increase of disorder and agrarian crimes in Ireland, and the relaxation of the strong bond of coercion which had hitherto been thrown on the passions of the people by the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy; and he thought the means of restoring order could only be found in raising the character and extending the influence of the higher classes of the Romish clergy. He endeavoured, with this view, to extend to them, and to the community generally, the benefits of an improved secular and religious education. Impressed with these ideas, he inserted in the Queen's Speech in this session a recommendation to the Commons to consider the best means of extending and improving academical education in Ireland; and in pursuance of this suggestion, Sir James Graham brought in a bill on

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

9th May for the erection of three colleges—one at Belfast, one at Cork, and one in Limerick—where the most ample means were to be afforded for education to all classes and all sects of religion. There were to be no theological professors in any of them; the object being to afford the means of secular education without religious distinction; but every facility was to be given to the establishment of theological chairs by voluntary means in connection with the colleges. It could not be said that this establishment was excessive in a country where there were 8,500,000 inhabitants, 400,000 children at the national schools, and as yet only one university—that of Trinity College, Dublin. The grant proposed, too, was very moderate, being only £100,000 to build the three colleges, and £18,000 a-year from the Consolidated Fund to keep them up. The bill passed, accordingly, by a majority of 177 to 26 in the Commons, and without a division in the Lords, and the colleges were established. Sincere but vehement partisans on both sides, however, violently objected to the absence of religious teaching, and the cry of "godless colleges" resounded alike in the Protestant and the Catholic ranks. Yet, however much it is to be regretted that circumstances should ever occur which render it necessary to separate religious from secular education, it is difficult to see what other plan could have been followed in a country so distracted by theological disputes, that each party would rather see their children ignorant than educated by their opponents; and although the new colleges have not been attended with all the success which was anticipated from them, their progress has been respectable, and they have undoubtedly conferred great benefits on the community.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxx. 345, 366, lxxxii. 379, 1025; Ann. Reg. 1845, 141, 162.

Another measure, framed with the view of elevating the character of, and lessening the political danger arising from, the Roman Catholic clergy, was brought forward in this session, which excited a much more violent opposition, and is still the subject of deep regret to a large and influen-

1845.

23. Enlarged grant to Maynooth College.

tial portion of the community. This was an enlarged grant to Maynooth College, where the Catholic clergy were educated in the principles of their own faith. The original grant to this establishment had been £9000 a-year; but this was found to be altogether inadequate either to its necessities or the numbers of persons requiring education there, who, being almost all in the very humblest ranks of life, were unable to contribute anything to the expenses of the college. To remedy this defect, and, if possible, elevate the class both of the teachers and the pupils at the seminary, Sir R. Peel proposed to extend the Government grant to £26,380 a-year, to make provision for five hundred students, and raise the professors' salaries, so as to insure comfort and respectability to persons holding these situations. As might have been expected, this measure excited the most violent opposition among the zealous Protestants, and meetings were held in every part of the kingdom as soon as it was brought forward, in which it was denounced, in the most unmeasured terms, as a direct encouragement of Popery, superstition, and treason, both to the State and the Christian religion. The Dissenters over the whole kingdom cordially united with the Episcopalians in resisting the measure; and in some of the most violent meetings, it was proposed and carried, amidst loud acclamations, that the Prime Minister should be impeached. After many days of animated and protracted debate, however, the bill was carried in the Commons by a majority of 133, the numbers being 317 to 184. In the Lords, it excited also a violent debate, but was carried by a majority of 157, the numbers being 226 to 69. A protest was lodged by five bishops and three lay peers, on the ground that the bill "provided for the maintenance of religious error and opposition to the Reformation, and countenanced the notion that religious truth was a matter of indifference to the State."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1845, 102, 140; Parl. Deb. lxxix. 33, 36, lxxxi. 594.

By this bill the Roman Catholics gained the great advantage, the importance of which was not at first per-

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

ceived, but ere long became conspicuous, which was, that the maintenance of their educational establishment, on a liberal scale, was thrown on the consolidated fund, and thereby withdrawn from the annual votes of Parliament; and there can be no doubt that the nation gained also, at least in point of tranquillity, by having a subject exciting such violent passions withdrawn from annual discussion. Never was a measure introduced with better intentions, or more in harmony with the principles of an enlightened toleration, and yet its effects have been to the last degree disastrous; and what is very remarkable, chiefly from its defeating the very object for which it was introduced. This is now admitted by every candid observer of all parties, religious as well as civil. It was intended to elevate the condition and acquirements of the Catholic clergy, and bring them more into harmony with the Government of the State, and it has had just the opposite effect; it has lowered the standard both of their education and ideas, and rendered them more than ever the irreconcilable enemies of the Protestant Establishment. This has arisen from a cause which was never thought of by either the advocates or the opponents of the measure; but which, when it came into operation, produced decisive effects, and that so naturally, that the only astonishing thing is, that it was not foreseen and predicted from the beginning.

24. Reflections on this measure, and its failure.

25. Causes of this.

The cause of the failure is, that the young priests are now educated at home instead of abroad, and thereby become more impregnated than ever with the bigotry and violent feelings which centuries of dissension have engendered between the rival Churches in Ireland. Before Maynooth was established, the young men intended for the priesthood were all sent to St Omar, Salamanca, or some foreign university; and it was the precise object of its institution to put a stop to this, because it was thought it brought the clerical youth under foreign ecclesiastical influence. It has prevented that evil, but it has induced

a much greater one—namely, the bringing them under the direct control of a body much inferior in acquirement, and much more inflamed in passion, than any foreign hierarchy—the Romish clergy of Ireland. Half a century ago, when the priests had all been educated at a foreign seminary, the Catholic incumbent of a parish in Ireland was often the best informed, and sometimes the most liberal person in it. It would be no easy matter to find such a phenomenon now. Educated at Maynooth, instructed by its local teachers, and contracted in their ideas and information to the narrow and impassioned field of Irish contention, the priests have become less informed, and, as a necessary consequence, more bigoted. Liberality, which was formerly advancing with rapid strides among them, has been almost entirely blighted by this calamitous change, and Great Britain has found to its cost that there is an evil greater than that of the priesthood being educated at a foreign seminary, and that is, being educated at their own.

26. Scotch Poor-Law Bill: History of the subject.

A measure, which excited much less attention at the time than these fiercely debated Irish questions, but was attended with unmitigated blessings in the end, was the new Poor-Law Bill, introduced by Lord Advocate M'Neill,* for Scotland, which passed into law in this session of Parliament. Like England, and all other countries which embraced the Protestant faith, Scotland at the Reformation had experienced the immense evils arising from the suppression of the streams of charity which in former days had flowed from the walls of the monastic establishments. Left destitute by this calamitous change, in the midst of a rude and distracted country, the poor in Scotland were reduced to the lowest point of misery, insomuch that a great and comprehensive measure for their relief was in a manner forced upon the Legislature. This was done by the Act 1579, c. 74, which, nearly

* Now the Lord Justice-General—1857.

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

contemporary with the 42d of Elizabeth, the foundation of the English poor-laws, and brought about by the same necessity, was mainly copied from the English statute, and fully imbued with its humane and benevolent spirit. By this Act, the poor, the sick, the aged, the indigent, the impotent, and those who have not wherewithal to maintain themselves, were declared entitled to legal relief; and the heritors in each parish were ordered to meet and assess themselves for their relief, the one-half to be laid on the landlords, and the other on the tenants.

27. Causes of the law being evaded.

It is impossible that words can be found indicating a more humane intention than those in this statute; but unfortunately the whole intentions of the Legislature were frustrated, and Scotland was left, practically speaking, without any system of parochial relief at all, in consequence of an unfortunate decision of the Court of Session in regard to the administration of it. Repeated statutes and royal proclamations had enjoined the sheriffs and justices to put the law into full execution; but the administration of it was intrusted, in the first instance, to the heritors and kirk-session, or churchwardens, of each parish, who formed a little court which was to sit in judgment on each claim for relief preferred against the parish. Unhappily the Court of Session took up the idea that this administrative body constituted a court of law in the legal sense of the word, and therefore that their decisions could be reviewed only in the Court of Session. Thus were the sheriffs, the ordinary judges of the counties, ousted of their jurisdiction in this matter; and as a decision of the Court of Session could not be obtained in less than eighteen months, and at a cost of at least £60 or £70, the review of that supreme court was of course, in the case of paupers, practically speaking, out of the question. Thus the heritors and kirk-session, the very parties who were to bear the assessment, were rendered virtually judges without appeal *in their own cause*. The result was that which ever has been and ever will be the

case where such an absurd anomaly in judicial procedure is permitted: they decided almost every case substantially in their own favour. They did not absolutely resist all claims for parochial relief, but they doled it out with so sparing a hand that, practically speaking, it was no relief at all. A shilling a-week to a widow with three or four children was deemed an ample allowance, and in most places even this pittance was refused, for in five-sixths of the parishes of Scotland, though they all abounded with paupers, there was no rate levied at all. So far had this gone that it was universally thought in England, and even believed in many parts of Scotland itself, that there were no poor-laws to the north of the Tweed.

28. The evils of this at last become intolerable.

As long as Scotland was a purely agricultural and pastoral country, this state of things was not attended with the evils which might have been anticipated. The landlords were generally resident; the collections at the church-doors for the poor were tolerably liberal; and a strong feeling of pride existed among the peasantry to endure any privations rather than apply themselves, or allow their relations to apply, for public charity. But with the spread of manufactures, the increase of wealth, and the rise of great towns, this auspicious social condition of the people came to a termination. A large proportion of the poor in all the great towns were Irish, who were far from their relations and utterly destitute; and the habits of civilised life and frequent migration of the working classes from one place to another, rendered them almost all entirely unknown to the affluent around them when overtaken by misfortune. These evils, which had been long felt and bemoaned by the humane, though stoutly denied by the selfish, were brought to a climax by the long-continued distress in the country from 1837 to 1842, during which the poor of Scotland, almost entirely unprovided for, underwent miseries probably unparalleled in any Christian land, for they had the evils of civilisation without its advantages. Fortunately these evils, and particularly

CHAP. XLII. 1842.

the connection of continued fever, as well as other epidemics, with the condition of the poor in the larger towns, at length attracted the attention of some members of the medical profession; which was the more important, as some of the most benevolent members both of the clerical and legal professions, trusting too much to speculative views as to the causes of destitution, and less conversant with the realities of life in the lowest parts of our large towns, set themselves in decided opposition to any change in the old Scotch system of merely voluntary relief.* On the other hand, a variety of facts tended to prove, that in a complex state of society the system of voluntary relief is never sufficient to meet the increase of destitution, which the varying modes of human existence, and the powers of procreation granted to the human species, naturally involve; that the increase of population, instead of being checked, as Malthus and others had supposed, by the increase of sin and misery, goes on in an increased ratio—under any circumstances admitting of human existence—as the examples of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland too surely indicated, simply by reason of the habitual *recklessness of character*, and absence of all *artificial wants*, in people brought up in a state of extreme poverty; that the natural result of this state of things is great suffering, and sometimes absolute destruction of great part of such populations, by famine and epidemic diseases; and that this result is always to be apprehended when the richer members of such a people are accustomed to think it wisdom and charity to withdraw their attention from such sufferings, and "pass by on the other side;" and that in such a state of society the only security which experience has shown to be effectual for applying remedies to the *early stage* of such evils, is that which is given by making Christian charity a

* See particularly Dr Chalmers and the late Lord Pitmilly. See *Proposed Alterations in the Scottish Poor-Law considered and commented on*; Edinburgh, 1840.

part and parcel of the law, whereby assistance may be *claimed* by those whose habits will otherwise inevitably degenerate into recklessness and profligacy, and systematic inspection may be depended on for counteracting idleness and imposture. Fortunately these evils attracted the attention of one who had the heart to feel, the courage to assist, and the ability to carry through, what was necessary to provide a remedy for them. DR ALISON, who had devoted benevolence unbounded, and talents of no ordinary kind, to the alleviation of the suffering with which he was surrounded in the city of Edinburgh, wrote several pamphlets, portraying in such striking and such truthful colours the destitute condition of the Scotch poor, that it at last attracted the notice of Government. A commission was issued, which took evidence and reported in favour of the change, and a bill was introduced by the Lord Advocate, founded on its recommendations, which, after encountering great opposition, at length passed into a law.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1845, 201, 202.

29. Provisions of the bill.

By this bill the axe was so far laid to the root of the evil, as that irresponsible administration of the poor laws was taken out of the hands of the heritors and kirk-sessions, who had hitherto conducted it. A Board of Supervision was appointed at Edinburgh, with the able and accomplished Oriental diplomatist, SIR JOHN M'NEILL, at its head, to superintend generally the administration of the poor over the whole country, and with power, at very little expense, to fix the rate of aliment to be awarded to paupers. A power was given to the sheriffs to review the decisions of the parochial boards in admitting or refusing to put applicants on the roll, and to decide litigated points between parish and parish. Parish boards were appointed to be elected by the rate-payers above £5 a-year, who administered the whole poor-laws in the first instance, and various provisions were made for the maintenance of lunatics, the education of pauper children, for medical attendance to the poor, and building poor-houses

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

in large cities. So far the provisions of the Act were admirable, and they applied a remedy where it was most needed in taking the irresponsible administration of the poor-laws out of the hands of the heritors and kirk-sessions. But in one essential respect it contained a grievous defect, which has been severely felt since. It said nothing as to the *able-bodied poor*, probably because, by a solemn decision of the Court of Session in 1804, it had been determined that the poor able to work, but unable by their labour to earn a subsistence, from high prices, were entitled to relief.[1] Had this precedent been followed, it would all have been well; but unfortunately, a few years after the new Act had passed, the Court of Session, having the English poor-laws and the French *ateliers nationaux* before their eyes, reversed their former decision, and held by a majority* that the able-bodied poor had no claim on the parish funds; and this decision was affirmed by Lord Truro in the House of Peers. The effect of this decision has been to establish a most painful and undeserved distinction between the situation of the poor in England, and Ireland, and Scotland; for while in the two former countries the able-bodied are entitled to relief when out of work, in the latter they have no such right. No words can exaggerate the disastrous effects of this state of things, in a country where so large a portion of the working classes are often thrown out of employment from the effect of commercial or monetary crises, and the strikes in the manufacturing districts, which render destitute thousands not concerned in them, but dependent on the combined workmen. A striking example of this occurred within three years of the passing of the Scotch Poor-Law Act;[2] for in the year 1847, while in England 1,626,201 poor were relieved, of whom 666,338 were able-bodied, and in Ireland above 900,000, in Glasgow and its immediate vicinity above 130,000 poor were out of employment, including the families of

[1] Pollock *v.* Darling, Nov. 19, 1804.

[2] Thomson *v.* Lindsay, Feb. 27, 1849, affirmed on appeal March 26, 1852; Personal knowledge; Porter, 94; Ann. Reg. 1845, 202.

* Lord Jeffrey, Lord Robertson, and Lord Fullerton, were in the minority.

the labourers, without any claim whatever on the funds of public charity.*

* The statute law of Scotland seems to be noways chargeable with this anomalous and most distressing state of things, for it has declared the right of able-bodied poor to relief if destitute, as well as the aged, sick, and impotent, in as express terms as words can do, by the ruling Act on the subject, which was nearly contemporary with the 42d Elizabeth, which established the English poor-laws, the Act 1579, c. 74, entitled "For punishment of the *strong* and idle beggars, and relief of the poor and impotent." The lists directed to be made up for sustentation are, "all aged poor, impotent, and decayed persons born within the parish, or having their most common resort there in the last seven years, and who of necessity must live by alms." The justices are to inquire if they be diseased *or whole and able in body*, and thereupon to consider what their *needful sustentation must amount to*, and to tax or stent the whole inhabitants of the parish according to their means and substance therefor. And it directs that if the aged and impotent persons not being so lame, diseased, or impotent, but that they may work at some manner of work, shall by the overseers in any parish *be appointed to work*, and refuse the same, "he shall be put in the stocks." Again, the Act 1592, c. 272, ordains "that strong beggars and their bairns be employed *in common work during their lifetimes*, and the power thereof is granted to the particular session of the kirk." Again, the Act 1663, c. 16, authorises all persons having set up manufactories to apprehend vagabonds who shall be found begging, or who, being masterless and out of employment, have not wherewithal to maintain themselves by their own means or work, and to employ them for their service as they shall see fit; "and it enacts that the parishes where they have haunted three years immediately preceding their being so apprehended, and who are thereby *relieved of the burden of them*," shall pay to the persons employing them 2s. Scots a-day. And in a proclamation of the Privy Council, dated 11th August 1692, it is ordained that "if any of the poor are *able to work*, the heritors of the parish are *required to put them to work* according to their capacities, furnishing them with meat and clothes; and if any child under fifteen be found begging, any person who shall take him before the heritors and elders, and engage to educate him to trade or work, the said child shall be obliged to serve such person for meat and clothes until he pass his thirtieth year." In conformity with these enactments, the Court of Session solemnly decided, in the case of Darling *v.* Heritors of Dunse, 19th November 1804, that an able-bodied man, capable of working and actually employed, but unable, from the high price of provision, to earn a livelihood, has a legal claim to parochial relief. This decision was held to fix the law to the effect that the able-bodied poor unable to earn a subsistence had a legal claim for relief; and so the law is laid down by Baron Hume, the highest legal authority in Scotland in recent times. The law, accordingly, was so applied by the Sheriff of Lanarkshire in 1848, when in that county 39,000 able-bodied poor were thrown out of employment, and, with their families, at least 90,000 more were in a state of starvation. The Court of Session, however, reversed this judgment by a majority, holding that the able-bodied poor, by the Scotch law, have no claim for relief either for themselves or their dependent children, though the parochial boards, if they think fit, are entitled to give such relief in these cases. On this decision Mr Nicholl, the able administrator of the English and Irish poor-law, observes: "To maintain the exclusion of able-bodied persons from legal relief in cases like those of Paisley, is practically *to withhold it from the most distressed*, who nevertheless must be supported in some way. May we not ask, therefore, whether provision ought not to be made for doing that with equity, and which will otherwise be done inequitably and with disorder—whether relief should not be provided promptly, efficiently, and fairly, rather than tardily and inefficiently?"[1]—NICHOLL'S *Scotch Poor-law*, p. 134.

[1] Adam *v.* M'William, Feb. 27, 1849; and Thomson *v.* Lindsay, Feb. 27, 1849, both affirmed on appeal, March 26, 1852.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

If ever the necessity and expedience of any legislative change was decisively demonstrated by experience, it is this great alteration in the parochial law of Scotland. Since the new law came into operation in 1846, the poor relieved have, on an average, been from 80,000 to 100,000,*

* Table of Poor-Law Administration, 1846-56.

Year.	Number of Poor.							
	Registered Poor relieved.	Registered Poor at date.	Casual Poor relieved during the Year.	No. of Poor refused Relief.	No. of such Poor relieved under order of Sheriff.	No. of Poor removed to England or Ireland, or to other Parishes.	No. of Insane or Fatuous Poor.	No. of Orphans or Deserted Children.
1846	...	69,432	26,894	...	...	...	...	...
1847	85,971	74,161	60,399	5,841	565	8,453	2945	4794
1848	100,961	77,730	126,684	8,577	766	13,733	3480	6121
1849	106,434	82,357	95,686	15,395	768	9,396	3574	7459
1850	101,454	79,031	53,070	14,235	604	6,306	3421	7969
1851	99,777	76,906	42,093	9,264	406	5,102	3520	7542
1852	99,637	75,111	46,031	7,627	399	5,253	3634	7681
1853	99,609	75,437	49,658	7,045	368	2,415	3787	8338
1854	103,777	78,920	54,951	6,473	294	3,056	3893	8280
1855	100,550	79,887	42,863	5,757	241	2,163	4292	8955
1856	99,363	79,973	38,020	5,603	256	1,898	4487	8620
Incr.	...	86	...	...	15	...	195	...
Decr.	1,197	...	4,843	4	...	465	...	335

Year.	Expenditure.							
	Poor on Roll.	Casual Poor.	Medical Relief.	Management.	Law Expenses.	Buildings.	Sanitary Measures.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1846	246,542	24,633	4,055	17,454	2,545	...	...	295,232
1847	336,515	36,340	12,879	43,158	5,022	...	...	433,915
1848	401,885	53,384	30,339	42,339	5,719	10,971	...	544,334
1849	417,462	51,470	33,010	51,804	8,519	14,775	...	577,044
1850	414,680	31,556	26,574	50,881	10,660	42,814	4384	581,553
1851	404,218	25,917	20,311	52,009	10,872	21,576	1038	534,943
1852	401,954	25,986	21,436	51,744	13,266	21,186	393	535,868
1853	411,135	24,114	21,737	52,352	13,036	21,644	532	544,552
1854	428,708	24,386	27,874	56,068	9,780	25,850	6259	578,928
1855	461,243	27,356	27,166	58,767	10,290	20,605	6355	611,784
1856	406,689	22,188	24,008	61,462	8,474	24,847	1675	629,348
Incr.	25,446	...	...	2,694	...	4,242	...	17,563
Decr.	...	5,167	3,158	...	1,815	...	4677	...

—*Scotch Poor-Law Commissioners' Report*, 1856, January 1857.—It is a curious and apparently unaccountable circumstance how much more expensive the cost

1845.

being about 1 in 27 of the population, and the cost of their maintenance has gradually risen from about £300,000 to about £600,000 a-year, being at last about a tenth, or 2s. in the pound, on the rental of the country. Every person at all acquainted with the state of Scotland and the dispositions of its inhabitants, must be aware that this large number of persons has been relieved, and these unwonted sums expended, in spite of the most rigid economy on the part of the parochial boards in the administration of the poors' funds, and the utmost efforts to resist any increase in the expenditure. The increase arose entirely from the absolute necessity for parochial relief which invariably arises in every country when it reaches a certain stage in civilisation and manufacturing industry. It is painful to think that it was so long and unnecessarily delayed.

30. Proof afforded by experience of the good effected by the bill.

Two questions which strongly excited party spirit, but were of little consequence in a general point of view, came before Parliament during the preceding session. The first of these was a charge brought against Sir James Graham, as Home Secretary, of having, for State purposes, ordered some letters posted by two foreign refugees and from two English Chartists, to be opened. The charge, which was of a kind violently to agitate the public mind, was brought forward by Mr Thomas Duncombe on the 14th June, and Sir James wisely consented to the matter being referred to a select committee. In the interval between the question being mooted and the report of the committee, the utmost efforts were made by the Whig-Radical press to excite the public mind on the subject, and

31. Charge against Sir James Graham of opening letters. June 1844.

of criminal prisoners is than that of innocent paupers. The cost of the Scotch paupers, from the above Tables, is from £5 to £6 a-head; and the English is just the same, the poor-rate being from £5,000,000 to £6,000,000 for the maintenance of 900,000 to 1,000,000 paupers. But the average cost of maintaining a criminal prisoner in Scotland is £16, 16s., deducting his earnings; and in Millbank Penitentiary it is £47, also deducting earnings. It is true, the prisoners for crimes are fed up in a way to which the paupers are strangers, for while the innocent pauper gets 38 ounces of solid nourishment in a week, the committed thief gets 60, the convicted thief 96, and the transported thief 160! This extraordinary fact is brought out in the very able and interesting reports of Mr Channing on the English Poor-Laws for 1839, p. 179.

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

the clamour from one end of the kingdom to the other soon became excessive. Every one feared that his private correspondence would be looked into by the prying and inquisitive Post-office officials. But the report of the committee soon put an end to this clamour. From it it appeared that so far from being illegal, the opening of letters by authority of Government was expressly authorised in the Acts establishing the Post-office; that this power had been since repeatedly confirmed, especially at the accession of Queen Victoria; that it had been exercised often by Whig Ministers, and especially Mr Fox, in 1782; that from 1799 to 1844 the warrants for opening letters had been on an average *only eight* in the year; and that the power thus legally conferred and sparingly exercised was essential to the safety of the State, and the preventing foreign or domestic conspiracies. This report effectually calmed the public mind and silenced the Radical press; and the public satisfaction was increased by a statement of the Duke of Wellington in the House of Peers, that there was no foundation for the report that the thing had been done at the instigation of a foreign power.[1]

1 Parl. Deb. 1844, lxxv. 892, 985, 1330, lxxvi. 312; Ann. Reg. 1844, 220, 222.

32. The Alien Act.

Connected with this was another subject, also disposed of in the same session of Parliament. The Alien Act had been little more than a dead letter for a number of years, chiefly in consequence of its containing no provision compelling foreigners to register their names, and of the number in consequence who avoided doing so. In 1842, out of 11,600 foreigners, known officially to have landed, only 6,084 were registered; out of 794 landed at Hull in that year, only one was registered; out of 1174 at Southampton, not one. In these circumstances, it was apparently not without reason thought that the time had arrived when the restrictions on aliens might be altogether removed. A bill to this effect was accordingly brought forward by Mr Hutt, from the Liberal benches, which enabled all foreigners at a trifling cost to obtain

letters of naturalisation conferring upon them all the privileges of British subjects, except those of sitting in the Privy Council or in either House of Parliament. So completely had the feeling against foreigners expired in Great Britain, and so thoroughly was the Continent thought to be pacified, that this important relaxation of former policy excited very little attention, and was scarcely noticed even in the public newspapers. And yet the world was on the eve of the Revolution of 1848, the almost entirely *bouleversement* of the Continent, and the Chartist insurrection in Great Britain!—so widely different is sometimes the under-current flowing in human affairs from what appears and attracts the attention of the legislature on the surface.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1844, 27; Parl. Deb. lxxvi. 842, 845; Spectator, 1844, 723; Mart. ii. 635.

33. Progress of the Anti-Corn-Law League.

During the whole of 1844 and 1845, the efforts of the Anti-Corn-Law League to keep alive agitation in the country on the subject of the import duties on grain were incessant, and attended with the most important effects. It is true, a great part of the facts to which they had formerly so triumphantly referred, in support of their argument, had now slipped from their grasp. It was now evident that the high prices of grain from 1838 to 1842 had been owing to a succession of bad harvests, and that there was no reason to suppose that in ordinary seasons the nation could not, within its own bounds, supply itself with food. The harvest in this year was not particularly good, and the importation of wheat was only 313,000 quarters, and yet its price was only 45s. the quarter. But though deprived of the powerful argument for a free importation of grain arising from high prices, the Anti-Corn-Law League found a full compensation for its loss in the general prosperity of the nation, and the embarrassments in which, from low prices, the agricultural interest was involved. Their lecturers and itinerant orators, many of whom were men of great ability, skilfully turned this state of things to their own advantage. They represented the general welfare of the nation, and the high wages of labour,

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

as the result of the application of the principles of Free Trade to all other interests; the depressed condition of the agriculturists, to the retention of protection on their own. The farmers were everywhere told that the low prices were *owing to the Corn Laws*, and could only be obviated by their removal; and, strange to say, this argument obtained very general credit. So far was the movement carried, that Mr Cobden, towards the close of the session, himself moved for a committee to inquire into the causes of agricultural distress, which was only defeated by a majority of 92 in a House of 334. It was distinctly proved by the Conservative members, from every part of England, that the distress among the farmers from low prices was not light and partial, but general and severe—a state of things which the more reflecting among them ascribed to Sir R. Peel's new sliding-scale affording no adequate protection to rural industry.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxviii. 818; 881; Ann. Reg. 1845, 62, 69.

34. Division on Mr Miles' motion.

So general had distress now become among the agricultural interest, that Mr Cobden said in his opening speech on this debate, that one-half of the farmers in England were in a state of insolvency, and the other half paying their rents out of their capital—assertions which were not contradicted from either side of the House. A few nights after his motion had been disposed of, Mr Miles, a Protectionist, moved that the surplus of the revenue should be applied to the relief of the agricultural interest, now, beyond all question, the most suffering in the community. The motion was negatived by a majority of 213 to 78; but in the course of the debate some observations fell from both sides, which showed not obscurely the changes which were approaching. Sir James Graham, on the part of Government, said, "So far from being sorry that a progressive increase of importation has occurred, I consider it *eminently advantageous;* for, with the rapid increase of our population, many years will not pass away before we are in want of food, if we persist in refusing admission to foreign corn." And Mr Disraeli said on the part of

the Protectionists: "Protection appears to be in about the same condition that Protestantism was in 1828. The country will draw its moral. For my part, if we are to have free trade, I, who honour genius, prefer that such measures should be proposed by the honourable member for Stockport (Mr Cobden), rather than by one who, by skilful parliamentary measures, has tampered with the generous confidence of a great people and a great party. For myself, I care not what may be the result. Dissolve, if you please, the Parliament you have betrayed, and appeal to the people, who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains this at least—the opportunity of expressing thus publicly my belief that a Conservative Government is an organised hypocrisy."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxviii. 985, 1028; Ann. Reg. 1845, 71, 75.

35. Farther divisions on the Corn Laws, and close of the session.

These words on the part of the two leaders of the Free Trade and Protection parties, sufficiently indicated to what crisis the country was approaching—what the one party intended, and what the other apprehended. So evident had this become, that towards the close of the session nothing else was debated in the House of Commons but the Corn Laws; and the declining majority for Protection showed that the waverers were beginning to seek their own advantage in anticipating what they saw was to become ere long the measures of Government. On June 3, Mr Ward moved for a committee to inquire into the situation and burdens of the landed interest, which was rejected by a majority of 73, the numbers being 182 to 109. Mr Villiers, on the 10th, brought forward his annual motion on the subject of the Corn Laws, and it was negatived by a majority of 132, the numbers being 254 to 122. But on a motion by Lord John Russell to go into a committee on the state of the labouring classes, with a view to the repeal of the Corn Laws, the majority was only 78, the numbers being 182 to 104. In the course of this debate, Sir James Graham dwelt strongly on the great fall which had taken place in the price of all the chief articles of consumption since the new tariff came into operation;

June 3.

June 10.

May 26.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

and Lord John Russell declared he would not now propose a fixed duty of 8s. a quarter on wheat, but if called upon to say what it should be, he would fix on 4s., 5s., or 6s.* It was evident from these statements that the Corn Laws were doomed, and that it was only a question of time when they should be struck altogether from the statute-book. The session closed on the 9th August with a Queen's Speech, in which her Majesty declared the "cordial assent" she had given "to the bills presented for remitting the duties on many articles of import."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1845, 79, 213; Parl. Deb. lxxx. 879, 1423, lxxxi. 330.

36. The change had become unavoidable, from the Monetary and Free-trade systems.

In truth, the state of the country, induced by the previous policy of Government, and the long adoption of the cheapening system, had rendered the extension of the principles of Free Trade to the commerce of grain a matter of necessity. Prices of all the articles of commerce and production having been reduced fully 50 per cent by the monetary system, and at least 15 per cent more by the reduced tariff, it had become impossible to maintain a system of heavy duties on the import of grain. When the prices of all articles of produce—that is, the remuneration of every species of industry—had been lowered above 60 per cent by the measures of the legislature, it became indispensable to lower, in some degree at least, the cost of the food on which the working classes were to subsist. The Protectionists were quite right in imputing the repeal of the Corn Laws to Sir R. Peel, but they erred in their opinion as to the time and the measure which induced the necessity that led to that repeal. It was in 1819 that the policy was inaugurated, which could not fail in

* Fall in the Price of the Chief Articles of Consumption, as referred to by Sir James Graham.

Wheat had fallen	from 64s. in 1841 to 46s. per quarter.
Beef,	from 7½d. to 5½d. per lb.
Mutton,	„ 7d. „ 6d. „
Sugar,	„ 7d. „ 5d. „
Coffee,	„ 2s. „ 1s. 4d. „
Tea,	„ 5s. „ 4s. „
Currants,	„ 9d. „ 6d. „
Candles,	„ 7d. „ 6d. „

—*Ann. Reg.*, 1845, p. 84.

the end to remove all restrictions on the import of grain; it was by unanimous votes of the House of Commons, including the whole Protectionists themselves, upholding the monetary system, that Free Trade was in reality established as the policy of the country. When Sir R. Peel introduced his tariffs in 1842 and 1845, so materially lowering the import duties, he only yielded to the necessity which he had introduced, and Parliament had so unanimously approved. In proposing to the legislature the entire repeal of the Corn Laws, he did not adopt a new policy; he only gave way to the necessary consequences of their own acts. Sooner or later, free trade in grain must have followed the contraction of the currency and free trade in other things. Some time might have elapsed before the change, in the ordinary course of events, became unavoidable, but meanwhile the hand of fate was on the curtain. Providence, in pity to human infatuation, was about to interpose visibly and decisively in human affairs, and those great changes were, on the eve of coming into operation, destined to apply a severe but merciful remedy to the miseries of Ireland, arrest the devastation of monied cupidity in England, give a mighty impulse to industry and improvement all over the world, and provide for the extension, in the remotest regions, of the dominant race among mankind.

37. Advantages and dangers of the potato as the food of man.

Planted originally by nature in the mountains of Peru, THE POTATO possesses the qualities which distinctly mark it as the destined food, in part at least, of a large portion of mankind. It flourishes in nearly every climate except the very warmest and the coldest; more sensitive to frost than even the dahlia or geranium, it is to be seen in perfection in every region of the globe except the tropics or the arctic circle. During the brief months of summer it makes its way and arrives at maturity in every part of the temperate zone. The roots, in their natural state, are not much larger than a strawberry; under the fostering

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

hand of culture they swell to ten or sometimes twenty times the size. It is far more productive, when brought to perfection by cultivation, of food for the use of man, than any cereal; it yields, on an equal space, three times as much for his sustenance as the best wheaten crop. Like civilisation, however, of which it is the attendant and the support, it involves in itself the seeds of corruption in its latest and most advanced stages, which threaten calamities as great to the physical necessities of man, as the depravity which often overspreads a wealthy and luxurious society does to his moral. But the wisdom of Nature has provided a remedy for the one as well as the other: like the human race, the succulent and prolific root can be propagated by seminal descent as well as by the transplantation of slips, and a new and untainted race be induced by the planting of fresh seeds in a region where the former race has been degraded by a long course of artificial culture.*

For a great number of years back the symptoms of the disease to which the potato, in the more advanced stages of its cultivation, is more particularly subject, had appeared in most parts both of Great Britain and Ireland; and in

* "This predisposition to disease in the potato, results, I conceive, from its having *degenerated*, in consequence of its having been subjected to a long course of artificial cultivation. The potato, in common with all other cultivated productions of the vegetable world, has a tendency to degenerate when the laws of nature are departed from; and as it is not a native of this country, it degenerates in proportion as the means to prevent its doing so have been neglected. Nature, however, has provided for the permanent health as well as productiveness of her offspring in the *seed* contained in the berry which the plant produces from its stalks. Hence, when we endeavour to perpetuate any particular kind of potato, by continually cutting and planting its tubers, it may reasonably be expected that we shall injure its general properties and powers, and thus gradually render it less fit for frost, and more liable to disease. And long experience has convinced me that the taint far more frequently attacks the long-cultivated and more delicate sorts of potatoes than any others; the former, I conceive, because the vegetative powers have become disordered and enfeebled by a long course of treatment opposed to nature. In 1833 I raised from the berry a great variety of new sorts. In 1834 the best were selected and planted separately. At the present time, though planted late, and cut, they display *an extraordinary degree of health and vigour;* while beside them, in the *same field, some of the old sorts are not only feeble, but tainted and curled.*"—*Quarterly Journal of Agriculture.*

1845. 38.

the latter country, where it constituted the staple food of the people, it had occasioned very great uneasiness and distress. The terrible scarcities, bordering on famine, in the Emerald Isle in 1823, 1837, and 1840, had been mainly owing to this cause. It had always been observed that the disease was most rife in the richest soils, and in wet or stormy seasons. Frequent thunderstorms, and an electrical state of the atmosphere, had been generally found to precede the spread of the devastating malady. Its frequent recurrence and alarming symptoms in bad seasons had excited the attention of the observers of nature, and the most sagacious of these had already recorded the opinion that the root was wearing itself out, and that it *would not last twenty years.** But in the summer and autumn of 1845 these symptoms manifested themselves in a far more alarming manner. The rains began early that season, and, contrary to what is usually the case, the ground was soaked by the end of July; but it was not till near the middle of the succeeding month that they set in with great severity. Then was seen what, under the existing monetary system, three weeks' rain in August can do in the British Isles. Hardly had the Parliament separated on the 9th August, amidst general congratulations for the past, and the warmest anticipations for the future, when the heavens seemed

First appearance of the potato rot.

* Talking with Dr Smith on the condition of Ireland in summer 1834, Mr Cobbett said: "The dirty weed (the potato) will be the curse of Ireland. The people must go back to the food they were accustomed to live upon before the general cultivation of the dirty weed—to grow wheat, oats, and rye. You have four millions of males in Ireland, and eight millions of uncultivated acres. This ground must be drained and brought into cultivation, and grow grain crops. *The potato will not last twenty years more. It will work itself out, and then you will see to what a state Ireland will be reduced.* You must return to grain crops, and then Ireland, instead of being the most degraded, will be one of the finest countries in the world. You may live to see my words prove true, but I never shall."—See DOUBLEDAY'S *Life of Peel*, vol. ii. p. 398, note. This prediction of Mr Cobbett is very remarkable—almost as much so as his memorable saying in America in 1819, that when he heard the Monetary Bill of that year was passed in England, he immediately gave orders to pack up his things and return to London, foreseeing that parliamentary reform could not be much longer delayed.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

to open, and incessant deluges overspread the already saturated earth. These were accompanied by violent thunderstorms, in the course of which the electric fluid descended in sheets of flame into "the green and deluged earth." This wet and stormy weather continued, with very little intermission, through the whole of autumn; prices rapidly rose, and serious fears began to be felt for the grain crops. But these were soon thrown into the shade by the reports which were ere long spread of a mysterious disease among the potatoes, which threatened absolute destruction to that widespread and important part of the subsistence of the people. The plague thus introduced was, literally speaking, "the pestilence which walketh in darkness." It was so minute that it eluded the powers of the finest microscope—so mysterious that it defied the researches of the most searching philosophy; but it was strong enough to overturn governments, general enough to alter established commerce, powerful enough to cause the migration of nations.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge; Mart. ii. 673; Ann. Reg. 1846, 2, 4.

39. Increased efforts of the Anti-Corn-Law League.

Charmed with the advent of so powerful and unexpected an ally, the Anti-Corn-Law League made the utmost efforts to turn it to the best account. Their language and their tactics underwent an immediate change. It was no longer, as it had been for the last two years, to the sufferings of the farmers, arising from low prices, which they promised to elevate by repealing the Corn Laws, that they addressed themselves; the loud cry was now raised that their instant abrogation was indispensable to prevent the people dying of famine. For some time past their funds had been mainly directed to increasing the number of Liberal electors on the rolls; and the Agricultural Protection Society, which had risen up to check its efforts, had boasted that the Anti-Corn-Law League had degenerated into a new registration club. Now, however, it resumed its pristine avocation of shaking and alarming the public mind, and this it did with

immense success. Fifteen thousand copies of the *League* newspaper were weekly distributed; two millions of other publications, tending to the same point, were circulated; three hundred thousand letters were sent out in the course of the year. Covent Garden theatre was fitted up in autumn as a great bazaar for goods, presented and exposed for sale in aid of the League fund. They brought £25,000, and 125,000 persons visited the magnificent establishment. The funds of the League seemed to increase with magical rapidity, as its necessities augmented and the period of its approaching triumph drew nigh. A meeting of the members was held in Manchester in December, at which a levy of £250,000 was agreed to, to further the objects of the League, and £62,000 was subscribed in the room. One gentleman subscribed £1500; twenty, £1000 each. This was in addition to £122,508 previously raised by subscription. It must be confessed that the leaders of this great association made most extraordinary efforts to promote its objects, and showed themselves consummate masters of the art of agitating and ruling mankind.[1]

[1] Ann. Register, 1845, Chron. 67, 193; Mart. ii. 674, 675.

40. General alarm, and symptoms of change.

Meanwhile prices of every kind of subsistence rose with extraordinary rapidity, and the real dangers of the period became such that there was no need of political agitation or imaginary terrors to exaggerate them. Wheat, which in June 1845 had been at 45s. 9d., rose so rapidly that in November it was at 60s.[2] Every other species of food advanced in a similar proportion, and these prices, to a people long inured to the low rates produced by the contracted currency, appeared to threaten famine. Every post from Ireland brought over fresh and more alarming reports of the failure of the potato crop, as well as the serious damage done to the general harvest by the heavy and long-continued rains. A transport similar to that which preceded the passing of the Reform Bill seized upon the public mind, and it became soon evident that the torrent was for the time

[2] Tooke on Prices, iv. 411, 412.

CHAP. XLII. 1845.

irresistible, and that in the mean time at least, and during the continuance of the potato famine, all duties on foreign grain must be removed. On 10th October, Lord Ashley addressed a letter to the electors of Dorsetshire, in which he declared his conviction that "the destiny of the Corn Laws was fixed, and that the leading men of the great parties in the legislature were by no means opposed to their eventual abolition." In the beginning of November cabinet councils were very frequent, and it was known that Government had set on foot extensive inquiries concerning the failure of the crop, and about the same time Lord Morpeth joined the Anti-Corn-Law League. The accession of so leading a political character was justly considered as decisive of the views of the entire Whig party. It was no longer a question, save of time, when the change was to be made, and the two leaders of the opposite parties saw that nothing remained for them but to run a race who should first make the desired alteration.[1]

[1] Spectator, 1845, 1132; Mart. ii. 675; Parl. Deb. lxxxiii. 86.

41. Lord John Russell's Letter. Nov. 22.

An attentive observer of the signs of the times, Lord John Russell no sooner saw that the period was approaching when Government must take the initiative in the expected changes, than he resolved to forestall their leader, and bid for power by anticipating the Minister in them. On 22d November 1845, he addressed a letter to the electors of London on the subject, in which he said: "The present state of the country in regard to its supply of food cannot be viewed without apprehension. Forethought and bold precaution may avert serious evils: indecision and procrastination may produce a state of suffering which it is frightful to contemplate. Three weeks ago it was generally expected that Parliament would be called immediately together. The announcement that Ministers were prepared on its first meeting to propose a suspension of the import duties on corn, would have caused orders to be sent at once to various ports of Europe and America for the purchase and transmis-

sion of grain, for the consumption of the United Kingdom. An Order in Council dispensing with the law was neither necessary nor desirable. No party in Parliament would have made itself responsible for the obstruction of a measure so urgent and beneficial. The Queen's ministers have met and separated without affording us any promise of such seasonable relief. It becomes us, therefore, as the Queen's subjects, to consider how we can best avert, or at all events mitigate, calamities of no ordinary magnitude.

"Two evils require your consideration—one of these is the disease in the potatoes, affecting very seriously parts of England and Scotland, and committing fearful ravages in Ireland. The extent of this evil has not yet been ascertained, and every week tends either to reveal unexpected disease, or to abate in some districts the alarms previously entertained. But there is one effect peculiar to failure in this particular crop. The effect of a bad corn harvest is, in the first place, to diminish the supply in the market, and raise the price. Hence diminished consumption and the privation of incipient scarcity, by which the whole stock is more equally distributed over the year, and the ultimate pressure is greatly mitigated. But the fear of the breaking out of this unknown disease among the potatoes, induces the holders to hurry into the market, and thus we have at one and the same time rapid consumption and impending deficiency, scarcity of the article and cheapness of price. The ultimate suffering must thereby be rendered far more severe than it would otherwise be. Another evil under which we are suffering is the fruit of Ministerial counsel and Parliamentary law. The duties on the importation of grain, passed three years ago, are so contrived, that, the worse the quality of the corn, the higher is the duty; so that when good wheat runs to 70s. a quarter, the average of all wheat is 57s. or 58s., and the duty 15s. or 14s. a quarter. Thus the corn barometer points to fair when the ship is bending under a storm.

42. Continued.

CHAP. XLII.

1845. 43. Concluded.

"It is no longer worth while to contend for a fixed duty. In 1841 the Free-trade party would have agreed to a duty of 8s. a quarter on wheat, and after a lapse of years this duty might have been further reduced and ultimately abolished. But the imposition of any duty at present, without a provision for its extinction in a short period, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent. The struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part at least of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which (this quarrel once removed) is strong in property, strong in the construction of our legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations and the memory of immortal services. Let us, then, unite to put an end to a system which has been proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people."[1]

[1] Doubleday, Life of Peel, ii. 403, 404.

44. Approach to a repeal of the Corn Laws, and resignation of Sir R. Peel.

Not less attentive than his rival to the circumstances of the country, Sir R. Peel having received the reports from Ireland, which were extremely alarming, brought before the Cabinet the question, What was to be done to avert the threatened calamity? His own idea was to throw the ports at once open by an Order in Council, trusting to Parliament for a bill of indemnity. But his colleagues were divided on the necessity of such an extreme measure, and after several cabinet councils had been held in the beginning of November, it was agreed to appoint a commission to inquire into and suggest measures to avert extreme distress in Ireland, and the Cabinet met on the 25th to consider the reports received. It was found, however, that the former division remained: a minority of the Cabinet, at the head of which was Lord Stanley, deemed the circumstances not yet such as to justify any permanent deviation from the protective policy of Government. Sir R. Peel thought otherwise: he was

so strongly impressed with the dangers of the approaching crisis that he deemed it indispensable to make, not only a temporary but a permanent change of policy. As the Cabinet was divided on this subject, however, and Lord John Russell, by his letter from Edinburgh, already quoted, had declared for total repeal of the import duties, and put himself at the head of the Free-trade party, he felt the impossibility at such a crisis of carrying on the government in the face of such a coalition, and he accordingly tendered his resignation and that of his colleagues to her Majesty, which was accepted.[1]

Dec. 6. [1] Peel's Mem. ii. Lord J. Russell's Statement; Parl. Deb. lxxxiii. 97; Ann. Reg. 1845, 2, 3.

45. Failure of Lord John Russell to form a government, and restoration of Sir R. Peel's Cabinet.

The Queen immediately sent for Lord John Russell, and he received the royal command on the 8th December, and reached Osborne House, in the Isle of Wight, on the 11th. His answer to her Majesty, when requested to undertake the formation of a ministry, was, that as the party to which he belonged was in a minority in the House of Commons, it would be vain for him to attempt a task which would expose her Majesty, ere long, to the inconvenience arising from a second change of servants. He recommended the Queen, accordingly, to send for Lord Stanley, to endeavour to form a Protective ministry; but that nobleman, upon being applied to, declared his absolute inability to do so.* Upon this the Queen renewed her application to Lord John, and showed him a paper which Sir R. Peel had left with her when he resigned office, in which he declared his intention, "in his private capacity, to give every support to the new minister whom her Majesty might select to effect a settlement of the question of the Corn Laws." This entirely altered the case, as it assured the Whig Cabinet of the support of at least one, and that the most powerful, of the great

* "I informed her Majesty, that, considering that Lord Stanley, and such of my colleagues as had differed from me, had positively declined to undertake the formation of a government, and that Lord John Russell having had the concurrence and support of all his political friends, with a single exception, had abandoned the attempt to form one, I should feel it my duty, if required by her Majesty, to resume office."—*Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 248.

CHAP. XLII.

1845.

Tory party. Lord John accordingly returned to town, to consult his friends on the possibility of forming a Cabinet, and at first there was every prospect of success. But ere long a difficulty, which proved insurmountable, presented itself. Earl Grey, upon being applied to, refused to join the new Cabinet if Lord Palmerston formed part of it—so strongly was he impressed with the hazard attending the foreign policy to which the latter noble lord was attached. Lord Palmerston, however, from his ability, and vast diplomatic information and connections, was too powerful a man to be dispensed with. The result was, that this attempt to form a Cabinet failed, and Lord John informed her Majesty of this on the forenoon of the 20th. On the preceding day, the Queen had informed Sir Robert Peel, that, as their political relation was about to terminate, she wished to see him next day to bid him farewell. He went accordingly, in obedience to the royal command; but, on entering her Majesty's presence, he was informed that Lord John Russell's mission had failed, and that nothing remained but for him to resume office. This he accordingly did, and the whole Cabinet resumed their places, with the exception of Lord Stanley, who retired. He was succeeded by Mr Gladstone as Colonial Secretary; and the Duke of Buccleuch, who at this crisis joined the Free-trade party in the Cabinet, was made President of the Council in room of Lord Wharncliffe, who had died on the 19th. The Cabinet was now entirely composed of Free-traders; and the influence of that party in the House of Commons, at the same time, was much increased by the unopposed return of Lord Morpeth to his old seat for the West Riding of Yorkshire, in room of Mr Stuart Wortley, who succeeded to the peerage on his father Lord Wharncliffe's death.[1]

Dec. 19.

Dec. 20.

[1] Peel's Mem. ii. 248, 254; Lord J. Russell and Sir R. Peel's Statements; Parl. Deb. lxxxiii. 89, 98, 106; Ann. Register, 1845, Chron., 320—1846, 205.

While these ministerial difficulties and arrangements, big with the future fate of the British empire and of commerce throughout the world, were in progress in the elevated political regions, the public mind was violently

shaken by an announcement, which suddenly appeared in the *Times* of December 4, to the effect that the repeal of the Corn Laws was resolved on in the Cabinet, and that Parliament would be called together in January to carry the resolution into effect. This statement was immediately contradicted, in the most unqualified manner, by the *Standard*, and other Tory newspapers; but the *Times* persisted in maintaining it, adding, that the repeal would be moved in the House of Commons by Sir R. Peel, and in the House of Lords by the Duke of Wellington. This excited a very great sensation, the more especially as it was known that the journal in question had very peculiar sources of information, and enjoyed the confidence, either directly or through the intervention of a third party, of more than one member of the Cabinet. Grain immediately fell, and the spirits of the League rose. They now everywhere announced that they were secure of victory, that they would accept of no compromise, and that "not a shilling nor a farthing should be imposed without sound reason shown." The sudden resignation, and still more sudden reconstruction of Sir R. Peel's Cabinet shortly after, left no doubt as to some great change in the Corn Laws being in contemplation; and it was soon whispered that the Cabinet was now unanimous, and that the "Iron Duke" himself had reluctantly given in. Before Parliament met, on 19th January, it was generally understood that the cause of Protection was lost, and the question was set at rest, so far as the Cabinet was concerned, by the paragraph in the Queen's Speech on the subject, delivered by her Majesty in person.[1]

46. Announcement of the repeal of the Corn Laws in the Times. Dec. 4.

[1] Times, Dec. 4, 6, and 7, 1845; Mart. ii. 677; Ann. Reg. 1846, 3, 5.

"I have to lament," said her Majesty, "that, in consequence of a failure of the potato crop in several parts of the United Kingdom, there will be a deficient supply of an article of food which forms the chief subsistence of great numbers of my people. The disease by which the plant has been affected has prevailed to the utmost extent in Ireland. I have adopted all such measures as were in

47. Queen's Speech. Jan. 19.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

my power for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings which may be caused by this calamity, and I confidently rely on your co-operation in devising such other means for effecting the same benevolent purpose as may require the sanction of the legislature. I have had great satisfaction in giving my assent to the measures which you have presented to me from time to time, calculated to extend commerce, and to stimulate domestic skill and industry, by the repeal of prohibitory and the relaxation of protective duties. The prosperous state of the revenue, the increased demand for labour, and the general improvement which has taken place in the internal condition of the country, are strong testimonies in favour of the course which you have pursued. I recommend you to take into your earnest consideration, whether the principles on which you have acted may not be yet more extensively applied, and whether it may not be in your power, after a careful review of the existing duties upon many articles the produce or manufacture of other countries, to make such farther reductions and remissions as may tend to insure the continuance of the great benefits to which I have adverted, and, by enlarging our commercial intercourse, to strengthen the bonds of amity with foreign powers."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1846, 5.

48. Sir R. Peel's argument in favour of Free Trade.

Such were the words by which Sir R. Peel, in her Majesty's name, announced to the world the greatest change ever made in the commercial policy of any nation, namely, the sudden transition from a Protective policy, the natural safeguard of a rising, to a Free-trade, the invariable demand of an advanced, stage of civilisation. His detailed plans were brought forward in a luminous speech of four hours' duration, the object of which was to represent the change in the Corn Laws, great as it was, as not an insulated measure, but part of a great system of policy by which all classes were to be ultimately benefited. The public excitement was extreme. Every crevice in the House was filled; Prince Albert and the Duke of Cam-

bridge were among the auditors. "The great principle of the relaxation of protective duties," said he, "recommended in the speech from the Throne, I intend to apply not to any one particular interest, but to all interests. On the contrary, I ask all the great interests of the country, manufacturing, commercial, and agricultural, to make the sacrifice, if it be one, to the common good. Of late the whole tariff of import duties has been more than once submitted to the House. In 1842 I commenced, and in 1845 carried out, to a very large extent, a plan for the remission of duties on the raw materials constituting the elements of manufacture. There is at this moment scarcely a duty on the raw material imported from foreign countries which we have not abandoned. I have, therefore, a right to call on the manufacturer to relinquish the protection of which he is now in possession. The only two articles of rude produce still subject to duty are tallow and timber: on the first, I propose to reduce the duty from 3s. 2d. to 1s. 6d. a cwt., and on the second, to make also a very great reduction. In regard to manufactures, I call on those who are engaged in making up the three articles, wool, linen, and cotton, which form the clothing of the country, to show the sincerity of their convictions in favour of Free Trade, by relinquishing the protection of which they are in possession. I do this the more confidently, as it was the manufacturing, and not the agricultural interest, which first called on the Government for protecting duties.

49. Continued.

"In pursuance of these principles, I propose to relinquish all duties upon the importation of the coarser species of manufacture in wool, linen, and cotton, and to reduce the duties on the finer linen and cotton goods from 20 to 10 per cent. The duty on silk, at present 30, is to be reduced to 15 per cent. On a great variety of articles which enter into general consumption—boots, shoes, hats, gloves, dressed hides, straw-plait, carriages, candles, soap, brandy, Geneva, sugar, and various other articles, the duty is to be materially reduced; and in return for this, I think

CHAP. XLII.

1846.

I am entitled to call on the agriculturists to submit to some sacrifice for the general good. What I propose is this: The duty on all seeds to be entirely removed, as also on Indian corn or maize, buckwheat and buckwheat flour. The duty on foreign butter, cheese, hops, and cured fish, to be reduced to half its present amount. Every sort of animal and vegetable food, apart from corn, to be admitted duty free, including all animals from foreign countries. All kinds of grain, after 1st February 1849, to be admitted at a nominal duty of 1s. a quarter, kept on only in order to obtain statistical returns of the quantities imported. During the intermediate period to 1st February 1849, the duties to be so calculated as to keep wheat at an average price of 50s. a quarter, and the scale adopted would, at the present price, which was 55s., lower the duty at once from 16s. a quarter to 4s.*

50. Continued.

"To compensate, in a certain degree, the loss which these reductions will occasion to the farmers, I propose to make certain concessions, especially relating to turnpike roads, poor-rates, and the support of criminals. Turnpikes in England are now under the direction of 16,000 local authorities, distributed over different parts of the country. I propose to compel parishes to unite themselves into districts for the repair of the roads, in such a way as will reduce these 16,000 managers to 600—a change which will get quit of a great number of superfluous employés, save expense, and insure a better administration of the roads. The power of removability should be taken from every labouring man who had earned an industrial residence of five years in any manufacturing town, and from all children, legitimate or illegitimate, residing with the father or mother, where the parent

* The Scale on Wheat was as follows:—

	Per Quarter.		Per Quarter.
Under 48s. the duty to be	10s.	Under 51s. to 52s., . .	6s.
„ 48s. to 49s., . .	9s.	„ 52s. „ 53s., . .	5s.
„ 49s. „ 50s., . .	8s.	„ 53s. and upwards, .	4s.
„ 50s. „ 51s., . .	7s.		

itself was not removed; from all widows till twelve months after the husband's death, and from all persons become chargeable on the ground of sickness, unless it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the magistrate that such sickness or disability is incurable. These changes will prevent a large part of the population which has migrated from the country into towns, during health, being thrown back on the country when they become chargeable. Facilities will be given for the improvement of entailed estates by advances of Exchequer bills, to be repaid with a moderate interest in a long course of years. Finally, the cost of maintaining felons in jail, which is now a burden on the counties, should be defrayed by the Treasury. This will be a relief to Ireland of £17,000; in England, of £100,000 a-year; and the whole expense of the constabulary of Ireland, amounting to £539,000 a-year, is to be also laid on the public Exchequer. To compensate these advantages to Ireland, I propose to take on the Treasury half the medical expenses of the Poor Law Unions, which in England will be £100,000, in Scotland, £15,000, and to give £15,000 a-year for the education of the children in the workhouses.

"These are the proposals which I offer for the adjustment—the final adjustment, of this question. I cannot appeal to any ungenerous feeling. I cannot appeal to fear, nor to anything which will be calculated to exercise an undue sway over the reason of those to whom these proposals are made. There may be agitation; but it is not one which has reached the labouring classes, there being among them a total absence of all excitement. I admit it is perfectly true, that without danger to the public peace we might continue all the existing duties; therefore I cannot appeal to fear as a ground for agreeing to those proposals. But this I do say, that there has been a great change of opinion in the great mass of the community with respect to the Corn Laws. There is between the master manufacturer and the operative classes a com-

51. Continued.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

mon conviction, that did not prevail in 1842, or at any former period, that those laws should be repealed; and while there is that union of sentiment between them, there appears to be, at the same time, a general contentment and loyalty, and a confidence in the justice and impartiality of this house. The example you have set of taking upon yourselves great pecuniary burdens, in order that you might relieve the labouring classes from the taxation to which they were subjected, has produced the deepest impression and the most beneficial effect upon their minds. But because this is a time of peace; because there is a perfect calm, except in so far as the agitation among the manufacturers may interrupt it; because you are not subject to any coercion whatever, I entreat you to bear in mind that this aspect of affairs may change, that we may have to contend with worse harvests than those of this year, and that it may be wise to avail ourselves of the present moment in order to effect an adjustment, which I believe must ultimately be made, and which cannot be much longer delayed without engendering deep feelings of animosity between different classes of her Majesty's subjects.

52. Continued.

"What were the facts which came under our cognisance, charged with the responsibility of providing for the public peace, and saving millions from the calamity of starvation? We were assured that in one part of this empire there are 4,000,000 of the Queen's subjects dependent upon a certain article of food for subsistence. We know that on that article of food no reliance could be placed. It was difficult to say what was the extent of the danger, what would be the progress of the disease, and what the amount of deficiency in the supply of food. Surely you will make allowance for those who were charged with the heaviest responsibility, if their worst anticipations should be realised. We saw in the distance the gaunt form of famine, and the spectre of disease following in its train. Was it not our first duty to avert the odious charge of

indifference and neglect of timely precautions? I declare in the face of this house, that the day of my life to which I look back with the greatest satisfaction and pride, is the 1st November last, when I offered to take the responsibility of issuing an Order in Council to open the ports, and trust to you for approval and indemnity. I wished then, that, by the first packet which sailed after the 1st November, the news might have gone forth that "the ports were open." During the latter part of December, and in January, there has been a temporary suspension of alarm; but still the accounts we have from all parts of the country are sufficient to excite great uneasiness, and imperatively call for the present remedial measure.

53. Continued.

"And now I come to the second consideration,—How, after the admission of foreign imported corn for a period of several months, do you propose to deal with the existing corn-law? My conviction is so strong that it would be utterly impossible, after establishing freedom of trade in corn for a period of seven or eight months or more, to give a guarantee that the existing law should at the end of that time again come into operation, that I cannot encourage the delusive hope of any such result. It is an utter misapprehension of the state of public opinion to suppose it possible, that after this country, during eight months, shall have tasted of freedom of trade in corn, you can either revive by special enactment, or by the tacit operation of the law itself, the existing corn-law. Surely the very fact of suppression is itself a condemnation of the law. It demonstrates that the law which professed, by a total reduction of duty when grain reached a certain price, to provide against scarcity, had failed in its most essential point. Could you, after this, insist upon a revival of this law? Would you revive the existing law in all its provisions? Do not suppose that those who advised suspension have overlooked the consequences upon the question of future protection. Do not disregard public feeling in a question of this kind. When the

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

food of the people is concerned, public opinion can never be disregarded. Are you insensible to the real state of public opinion on the subject? Are you insensible to the altered opinion of many of your own party? Look to the change of opinion that has taken place, not among mere politicians—which you are apt to attribute to some selfish or corrupt motive—but look at the opinions now expressed, of the sincerity of which conclusive proof has been given, by some of the most honourable men that ever sat upon those benches. Their conduct affords proof that the minister who should suspend the law, and give a guarantee to revive it whenever the period of suspension shall have passed away, would have enormous insuperable difficulties to encounter.

54. Continued.

"Your precautions, however wisely taken, may nevertheless fail. It seems to be incident to great prosperity that there shall be a reverse, that the time of depression shall follow the season of excitement and success. That time of depression may perhaps return, and its return may be coincident with scarcity, occasioned by unfavourable seasons. Gloomy winters like those of 1841 and 1842 may again set in. Are those winters effaced from your memories? *From mine they never can be effaced.* Surely you have not forgotten with what earnestness and sincerity you re-echoed the deep feelings of a gracious Queen, when at the opening and close of each session she expressed her warmest sympathy with the sufferings of her people, her warmest admiration of their heroic fortitude. These bad times may recur. The years of plenteousness may have ended, and the years of dearth may come, and again you may have to offer the unavailing expressions of sympathy, and the urgent exhortations to patient resignation—will it then be no satisfaction to you to reflect that, by your own act, you have been relieved from the grievous responsibility of regulating the supply of food? Will you not then cherish with delight the reflection, that in this present hour of com-

parative prosperity, yielding to no clamour, impelled by no fear, save that provident fear which is the mother of safety, you have anticipated the evil day, and long before its advent had trampled on every impediment to the free circulation of the Creator's bounty? And when you are again addressing your fellow-subjects, and encouraging them to bear without repining the dispensations of Providence, may God grant that, by your decision this night, you may have laid in store for yourselves the consolation of reflecting that such calamities are, in truth, the dispensations of Providence, and that they have not been caused, have not been aggravated, by laws of man, restricting, in the hour of scarcity and deepest need, the supply of food!

"You have a right, I admit, to taunt me with inconsistency in my opinions on this subject; but when you say that by my adoption of the principles of free trade I have acted in contradiction to those principles which I have always avowed during my whole life, I positively deny the charge. I foresaw the consequences which would result from the measures which I have felt it my duty to propose. We have not formed our opinion merely on local information. We were charged with the heavy responsibility of taking measures against a great calamity in Ireland; before we brought our remedies forward, we had taken every measure to obtain correct information on the state of that country. Whatever may be the result of these discussions, I feel severely the loss of the confidence of those from most of whom I have hitherto experienced a generous support. So far from expecting them to adopt my opinions, I perfectly recognise the sincerity with which they adhere to their own. I honour their motives; but I claim for myself the right to give that advice to my Sovereign which I conscientiously believe to be conducive to the general well-being. I wish to convince the people that the greatest object which this or any other Government can have is to elevate the social

55. Concluded.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

condition of those with whom we are brought in to no direct relations by the exercise of the elective franchise. I wish to show them that our object has been to apportion taxation, so that we shall relieve industry and labour from any undue burden, and transfer it, so far as is consistent with the public good, to those who are better able to bear it. I look to the present peace of this country, to the absence of all disturbance, to the non-existence of any commitment for a seditious offence ; I look to the calm which exists in the public mind ; I look to the absence of all disaffection ; I look to the increased and growing public confidence, on account of the course you have taken in relieving trade from restrictions, and industry from unjust burdens ; and where there was disaffection I see contentment, where there was turbulence I see peace ; where there was disloyalty I see loyalty. I see a disposition to confide in you, and not to agitate questions that are at the foundation of your institutions. Taught by this experience, I feel I have only done my duty to my Sovereign and my country in submitting the measures I have now brought forward to the consideration of Parliament."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxiii.256, 263, 282—lxxxvi.705; Ann. Reg. 1846, 33, 36.

56. Reception of the measure in the country.

No words can describe adequately the sensation which this speech produced in the country. The immediate reduction of the duty on wheat from 16s. a quarter to 4s., and its entire abolition at the end of three years, were changes so prodigious that they outstripped the hopes of the most sanguine of the Free-traders, and excited a profound feeling of indignation among all the adherents of the agricultural interest. The impression upon the latter class was the stronger that the alarm consequent upon the potato rot, which had been very great in the preceding November, had sensibly declined in the following month, and accordingly wheat, which had been 60s. in the former period, had fallen in the beginning of January to 55s. a quarter. It had been discovered upon farther information, that the disease, though as bad as possible in some parts of the country, was as yet at least by no means

universal, and that the apprehensions entertained of a great deficiency of subsistence for the body of the people had been much exaggerated. But above all, it was asked, "Why legislate permanently for a temporary evil? Grant that the potato rot is as universal and serious as the strongest Free-traders allege, that may afford a good reason for throwing open the ports at once, by Order in Council, and keeping them open as long as the calamity lasts; but is it any reason for entirely altering the policy of the country, and permanently adopting free trade in lieu of the protection under the shelter of which it has hitherto risen to greatness?" The Free-traders, on the other hand, were in ecstasies, and regarding, with reason, the battle as already gained, would not condescend to notice the arguments of their adversaries, but contented themselves with simply vilifying and abusing them. These angry feelings on the one side, and exulting on the other, exhaled during the debate which ensued in the House of Commons, which lasted for TWELVE successive nights, and gave rise to more acrimonious expressions on both sides, but especially the Protectionist, than had ever been heard within the walls of Parliament.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1846, 119, 128; Mart. ii. 684; Doubleday, ii. 419, 431.

57. Mr Disraeli's caustic remarks.

"Sir," said Mr Disraeli, "the right honourable gentleman has supported a different policy for a number of years. Well do we remember, on this side of the house, perhaps not without a blush, the efforts we made to raise him to that bench where he now sits. Who does not remember 'the sacred cause of Protection'—the cause for which sovereigns were thwarted, parliaments dissolved, and a nation deceived—delightful, indeed, to have the right honourable gentleman entering into all the details of what passed when he called upon his Sovereign! Would his Sovereign have called on him if he had not in 1841 put himself at the head of the gentlemen of England? That well-known position he took—a position to be preferred to the confidence even of sovereigns and courts. I say it without a hope of a party triumph, for I believe I

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

belong to a party that can triumph no more—for we have nothing left for us but the constituencies we have *not* betrayed. I do say my conception of a great statesman is that of one who represents a great idea, an idea that leads him to power, an idea with which he has identified himself, an idea which he is to develop—which he can and does impress upon the mind of the nation. That is my idea of a great statesman. I care not whether he be a manufacturer or a manufacturer's son—the position is still grand, I may say heroic. But a man who never originates an idea, a mere watcher of the atmosphere—a man who, as he says himself, takes his observations, and when he finds the wind veers towards a certain quarter, trims to suit it—such a person may be a powerful minister, but he can never be a great statesman.

58. Concluded.

"There is a difficulty in finding a parallel in any part of history to the position of the right honourable gentleman. The only parallel I can find is an incident in the late war in the Levant, which was terminated by the policy of the noble Lord opposite (Palmerston.) I remember when that great struggle was taking place, when the existence of the Turkish empire was at stake, the late Sultan, a man of great energy and resources, was determined to fit out an immense fleet to maintain his empire. A vast armament was accordingly collected. It consisted of many of the finest ships that ever were built. The crews were picked men, the officers were the ablest that could be found, and both officers and men were rewarded before they fought. Never did an armament similarly appointed leave the Dardanelles since the days of Solyman the Magnificent. The Sultan personally witnessed the departure of the fleet, and all the muftis prayed for the success of the expedition, as all the muftis here prayed for the success of the late general election. Away went the fleet; but what was the Sultan's consternation when the Lord High Admiral steered at once into the enemy's port!

The Lord High Admiral was called a traitor, but he had the talent of vindicating himself. "True," he said, "I did place myself at the head of this valiant armada; true it is that my sovereign embraced me: true all the muftis prayed for my success; but I have an objection to war; I see no reason for prolonging the struggle, and the only reason I had for accepting the command of the fleet was that I might terminate the contest by betraying my master! And yet such was the plausibility and adroitness of this Lord High Admiral, that he is at this moment first Lord of the Admiralty under the new regime." (Sir C. Napier—"I thought he was dead.") "The gallant commodore says he is dead; dead he may be, but at any rate he was not shot for treason."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxiii. 259.

59. Arguments against the bill.

These violent speeches are too characteristic of the ulcerated state of feeling in the country, then exasperated beyond all precedent, to be omitted in general history; but they have no bearing upon the general question, which was, whether the proposed change was in itself necessary and expedient, not whether Sir R. Peel did right or wrong in proposing it. The general question, however, did not want able advocates on the Protectionist side. It was argued by Lord Stanley, Mr Disraeli, and Lord George Bentinck: "From the earliest times—so far back as the reign of Edward IV.—the legislature has recognised the principle of protecting native industry, as a reason for regulating the importation of corn; and it has continued to be the rule of our legislature, down to the present period, to give encouragement to the cultivators of its own soil, in order to secure the independence of this country as regards foreign nations for ever. This has not only been our own policy, but at the very moment when we are venturing upon the bold experiment of leaving the supply of the nation's food to chance, every other country in the world of any eminence is maintaining a protective policy. Sir R. Peel could not have failed

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

to foresee the shock to confidence in public men of all parties which such a change as he has introduced must inevitably produce; but he has entirely overruled the emergency and position in which he was placed; he has confounded the brawling torrent of agitation with the deep still current of public opinion.

60. Continued.

"The grounds assigned for the measure is the famine in Ireland, and the success of the changes on the tariff; but these reasons are inconsistent with each other. If this bill relieved the famine in Ireland, it can only be by bringing down the price of corn to the means of the starving population of Ireland. You must distinguish between famine and great local scarcity. We were threatened with the latter, but not with the first, in the expected reduction of prices. When the question came before the Cabinet, I (Lord Stanley) yielded my own opinion, and consented to *a suspension, but a suspension only,* of the corn-law. This was all that the case required; for the prices showed that there was no general want of food in the country; and I could see no reason for altering a general system for a partial failure; but I stood alone. It is a total mistake to say that the sliding-scale has produced great fluctuation of prices; the fact is, that it has done more than any other legislative measure to prevent that fluctuation. Never were the changes of price so violent and frequent as before that scale was introduced; they then varied from 50s. to 120s. a quarter; whereas since that time the fluctuation has been from 39s. to 80s., and generally from 40s. to 56s. In articles of subsistence to which the sliding-scale has not been applied—as potatoes and cotton—the fluctuation of prices has still been enormous. The present corn-law has kept us independent of foreign nations, and preserved an unprecedented steadiness in the price of grain; and no man can assert that these advantages have been purchased by the sacrifice of any interest. On the contrary, the constant complaint of the agricul-

turists during its continuance has been, that the prices of their produce, with the exception of very bad seasons, have been ruinously low.

61. Continued.

"If the Corn Laws are repealed, the price of corn will fall greatly; we shall have an inundation of foreign wheat at 40s. a quarter. In what way is this reduction, supposing prices are forced down to that level, to benefit any class in this country? The *foreign* grower, indeed, will be immensely benefited; he will be furnished with profits which will ere long enable him to extend his production, and encroach yet more largely on the English fields; but in what state will the English agriculturist be, if, by the operation of that law, prices are permanently forced down to 40s. or 42s. a quarter? Will the manufacturer be benefited by the change? He can be so only by a reduction of wages, and if that takes place, where is the good that is to accrue to the working classes? Supposing wages to be reduced, and the cost of production of manufactures to be thereby lessened, and the market for them extended, so far from being a gainer, he will be a loser by the change; the British manufacturer will be a loser. Every acre *brought into* cultivation on the Vistula or the Danube will *throw an acre out of cultivation* on the Thames or the Severn; and what will he gain if he destroys the bread, and thereby ruins the market, of the cultivators who consume five pounds a-head of his produce, and "calls into existence" an equal number of those who consume fivepence a-head?

62. Continued.

"It is altogether a delusion to say that Russia, Prussia, and the United States do not take our manufactures because we do not take their corn. They do not take our manufactures because they wish to establish such fabrics among themselves, and in the mean time desire to raise a revenue by means of import duties. These motives will still continue, although we admit their grain duty free. Rely upon it, that change will make no difference in their consumption of our manufactures. It is in our

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

own colonies that we must look for the only durable and growing market for our fabrics, which will soon come to overtop all other markets put together; but this measure, so far from encouraging these distant offshoots of our empire, goes directly and obviously to injure them. It deprives them of all the advantages they have hitherto enjoyed as British subjects, by letting in all nations to compete with the produce of their industry. Destroy the principle of protection, and you destroy the whole basis on which our colonial system rests, which is, that the colonies are to be in a more favourable situation than foreign nations. You sever the strongest bond—that of mutual self-interest—which unites them to the mother country. It is an easy step for those who have been taught commercial independence to apply it also to political relationship.

63. Continued.

"The principle of Free Trade can never be adopted in what has been emphatically called a Protection Parliament, without a loss of character to public men. The alleged change of circumstances during the last three years furnishes no reason for abandoning the settled policy of two centuries, far less for the Premier's deserting the principle he has strenuously maintained during the last thirty years. The doctrine of free trade is an absolute delusion: prolific of evil, it can be productive of no good to any party. It is simply, under existing circumstances, a preference given to foreign over native industry; and is that the way to benefit a nation? Even the manufacturing classes, to whom such strong appeals are made, will not in the end benefit by it. If the price of provisions permanently falls, their wages will fall with them, and what the better will they be when wheat is at 45s. instead of 75s., if their wages are 15d. a-day instead of 2s.? Will our shopkeepers be benefited if ten or fifteen millions are cut off from the rent of land that is the income of their best purchasers; or our manufacturers, if our rural labourers, who now form so large a

part of the home market, are disabled from continuing their purchases of their produce, and the British merchants are sent to the serfs of Poland or the Ukraine to supply their place?

64. Concluded.

"The Irish famine, of which so much is said, is a mere pretence, got up for party purposes. There is not even a scarcity in the land. Prices prove this: wheat is at 55s. a quarter; oats at 26s.: are these famine prices? Why, in 1841, wheat was at 80s., and yet no one said there was a famine. The fact is, that the crop, on the whole, is fully an average one. The Duke of Wellington has admitted that there is no scarcity of food in Ireland, and Lord Cloncurry has added, that there is enough of oats in it to feed the whole people. There is in many places great distress among the peasantry, but that is not because they cannot get food to buy, but cannot get money to buy it with. Is it a remedy for this woeful state of things to admit the competition of foreign hands to flood the already overstocked Irish labour-market? The potato disease was in some places very formidable, but it was so only in a few districts. In Roscommon it was unknown; in Tipperary and Queen's County, very partial. The alarm spread by the Government Commissioners has been the main cause of the panic which has been diffused, and even of the losses which have been sustained; for they, by spreading evil reports, induced the people in many places to raise their potatoes before they were ripe, and thus caused them to rot. But suppose the immediate danger from the potato rot to be as great as the most devoted adherents of Government represent, is that any reason for altering the entire system and policy of the State on account of a *transitory* evil, how serious soever? If scarcity is apprehended, by all means repeal all import duties so long as it continues; but it was reserved for the Right Honourable Baronet to provide a remedy for a *dreaded scarcity in* 1846 *by enacting the repeal of all import duties in* 1849."[1]

[1] Parl Deb. lxxxvi. 721—lxxxiv. 349; lxxxiii. 263. Ann. Reg. 1846, 68, 81.

CHAP. XLII.

1846.

65. Result of the debate.

As the interesting debate, of which the above is only a faint outline, continued in the House of Commons, the public interest went on continually increasing, until at length it reached an unbearable point of excitement. This arose, not from any doubt of the sincerity or wishes of Ministers, which had been unequivocally evinced both in the Royal Speech and in the course of the debate, but from uncertainty as to the issue with a parliament avowedly elected under Protection influences, and to withstand the first advances of Free Trade. Great therefore was the surprise of the nation, unbounded the triumph of the Anti-Corn-Law League, when the division took place at twenty minutes before three on the morning of the 27th February, and there appeared a majority of 97 for Ministers, in a very full house, the numbers being 337 to 240. The bill was finally carried on the third reading, on the morning of the 16th May, by a majority of 98. Hoping to conciliate the all-powerful Prime Minister, who had expressed himself as willing to make theirs an exceptional case, the whole West India interest voted with him in the majority on this occasion. They met their deserts and a just retribution at the hands of his successors within two months afterwards. The shipping interest did the same; one and all of them voted with Ministers. They did so, partly in the idea that a large increase of foreign importation would give great employment to the British commercial navy, and partly from the idea that the navigation laws were so essential to our national independence that there was not the slightest danger of their being touched. "Ita dum singuli pugnant universi vincuntur."[1] Within three years they too were swept away. In the Lords the result was still more remarkable, for the second reading was carried by a majority of 47, and the bill passed finally on the 22d June. Considering that the great majority of the peers were dependent on landed estates, and that the effect of the bill in lowering prices was distinctly understood, this division must be considered as

[1] Tacitus.

very remarkable, for beyond all doubt the greater part of their lordships thought very differently from what they voted. It indicates how great was the pressure which the Anti-Corn-Law League had come to exercise upon the public mind, how powerful was the influence which the Government and the Duke of Wellington possessed in that assembly, and what good use the Whigs, since their accession to power, had made of their time in neutralising the hostile majority in the Upper House by a copious creation of Peers.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb lxxxiv. 349; lxxvi. 721; lxxxvii. 1033. Ann. Reg. 1846, 69, 98.; Disraeli's Life of Bentinck, 321.

66. Duke of Wellington's speech on the bill.

The arguments adduced on either side in the House of Peers, were substantially the same as those adduced in the Commons, and need not be again repeated. But there is one short and characteristic speech, which, as coming from so great a man, and eminently descriptive of a leading feature in his mind, deserves to be particularly noticed. The Duke of Wellington said: "I address you under the disadvantage of appearing as a Minister of the Crown to press this measure, in opposition to the views of many of those with whom I have long acted in public life, with whom I have lived in habits of close intimacy and friendship, and whose good opinion it has always afforded me the greatest satisfaction to obtain, and indeed which I have enjoyed in the highest degree. I have already explained to you the circumstances under which I became a party to this measure. In November last, after the Cabinet to which I belonged had resigned, I considered it my bounden duty to my Sovereign not to withhold my assistance from her Government, and I resumed my seat at her Majesty's council, and gave my assistance to my right honourable friend the First Lord of the Treasury, because I knew, at that time, that he would propose a measure of this description—nay, this very measure. It was this very measure which he proposed to the Cabinet early in that month. It is not necessary for me, my lords, to say more on that subject; and though some of your lordships may entertain a prejudice against me for

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

the course which I am pursuing, I can justify it before your lordships, by telling you that I was bound to take it, and that if the same circumstances occurred to-morrow I would take it again. I was bound to my Sovereign and to my country by considerations of gratitude, of which I need not say more than to allude to them on this occasion."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1846, 92; Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 968.

67. Cause of this inconsistency.

This frank and manly declaration, coming from the old soldier who had grown grey in the service of his sovereign and country, drew forth loud cheers from all parts of the house. It is highly characteristic of the ruling principle of the Duke's mind, which had appeared in exactly the same way in the crisis on Catholic Emancipation, and in that on Reform. On both of these occasions he accepted a seat in a Cabinet, and on this last the lead in forming a Cabinet, which was to bring in a measure in direct opposition to his previous and often-expressed opinions. It would be uncharitable to conclude from thence that the Duke had no settled opinions on political subjects, and embraced such merely as suited the circumstances of the moment. His whole life belies such a supposition; no man had more fixed and decided convictions. The truth rather was, that his habits of military obedience had rendered one principle in his breast paramount to all others, and that was duty to his sovereign and country in moments of danger. This duty he felt himself bound to discharge, even at the hazard of his own consistency. If there is much to admire in this noble feeling, which certainly is that which should ever animate a *soldier's* breast, there is much to dread in it when it becomes the guide of a *statesman's* career. And this only affords another illustration of the truth of a remark, which all ages have made, that the duties of civil and military life are often opposite to each other, and cannot, under any circumstances, be blended without imminent danger to both. The first duty of the soldier is obedience—the first of the statesman, deliberation.[2]

[2] Doubleday, ii. 431.

1846.

68. The Budget for 1846. May 29.

Amidst the multiplied and protracted debates which took place on this all-important subject, in this session of Parliament, the Budget was well-nigh forgotten; yet it presented some features of interest and importance, which foreshadowed the perilous course on which the Premier had advanced in repealing or reducing so many of the indirect taxes. It came on upon the 29th May; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reason congratulated the country on the flattering condition of the finances, which he ascribed to the effects of Free Trade, without any reference to the railway expenditure. Sir R. Peel had calculated the revenue for the year at £49,762,000; but the actual receipts were £51,200,000. The expenditure was £49,400,167, leaving an apparent surplus of £2,609,177. Of this, however, £750,000 was the payment from China, which could only be reckoned on for one year more. For the ensuing year he calculated on a revenue of £51,650,000; but, owing to an increase of £140,000 for the army, £600,000 for the navy, and £401,000 for the ordnance, which had become absolutely indispensable to restore these services to anything like a state of efficiency, the surplus would be only £776,000, of which no less than £700,000 would again be money from China.*[1] It afforded a melancholy proof of the chasm which the large reduction of the indirect duties had made in the revenue, that the only surplus in the ensuing year, which even the sanguine mind of the Chancellor of the

1 Budget, May 29, 1846; Ann. Reg. 1846, 119, 120; Parl. Deb. lxxxvi. 1430, 1438.

* Actual Expenditure of 1845, and Estimated Expenditure of 1846.

	1845. Actual Expenditure.	1846. Estimated Expenditure.
Interest of Debt, . . .	£28,200,000	£28,100,000
Charges on Consolidated Fund,	2,400,000	2,500,000
Army, ...	6,715,000	6,697,000
Navy, ...	6,943,000	7,521,000
Ordnance, ...	2,142,000	2,543,000
Miscellaneous, . . .	3,116,000	3,435,000
	£49,316,000	£50,873,000

—*Ann. Reg.* 1846, pp. 120, 121.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

Exchequer could foresee, was derived, after two years of unparalleled prosperity, from the accidental and transitory source of Chinese payments.

69. Determination of the Protectionists to drive Sir R. Peel from power.

It was foreseen, and scarcely disguised in the course of the debate on the repeal of the Corn Laws, from the extreme violence of the schism which had taken place in the Ministerial majority, and the words never to be forgiven which had passed between the Ministers and their opponents, that it was only a question of time when the Administration was to be overturned. Such was the exasperation of the Protectionist leaders on the Ministerial benches, that it was known they would gladly coalesce with their opponents on the opposite side of the house, to eject a Government which, as they thought, had betrayed the party that had placed it in power. Yet so utterly at variance were the views of the ultra-Tories and the Radicals on all other subjects but their common animosity to the Premier, that it was not likely they would soon find a subject on which they could unite without such a flagrant dereliction of principle as might discredit and compromise both in the eyes of the nation. Chance, however, was more favourable to them than parliamentary skill could have been. A bill was actually before Parliament, which, it was thought, presented, most opportunely, the much-wished-for opportunity of uniting. This was the LIFE-PRESERVATION BILL FOR IRELAND.[1]

[1] Doub. ii. 433; Mart. ii. 685, 686.

70. Increased agrarian outrages in Ireland.

Ever since the decline of O'Connell's influence, by whose powerful voice its troubled waters had so often been stayed, and the downfall of the temperance movement, the state of Ireland had become more disturbed; and in the latter months of 1845 and first of 1846, it had risen to such a pitch of outrage that some remedial measure had become indispensable. This was the natural consequence of the dreadful state of destitution of food, towards which the wretched peasantry were rapidly approaching. When ejectment for non-payment of rent from his little possession was little short of a sentence of death by slow

process pronounced upon a man and his whole family, men placed in a position so dreadful, almost unavoidably acted upon the principle of self-preservation, and endeavoured, by violence and intimidation, to avoid such disaster. To endeavour to check such outrages was the first duty of Government; to remove their cause was the second. Early in the session, accordingly, Sir R. Peel introduced Feb. 24. a measure by Lord St Germains into the House of Peers, and the facts stated in support of it were of so appalling a kind as caused the bill to pass the Lords with scarcely any opposition.* It empowered the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim any county or barony in which murder or attempt to murder had been committed, as falling under

* Crime and Outrages in Ireland.

	1844.	1845.
Homicides,	144	136
Firing at persons,	104	138
Serious assaults,	504	544
Assaults, common,	242	251
Robberies of arms,	159	551
Administering illegal oaths,	59	22
Threatening letters,	662	1944
Houses attacked,	254	483
Firing into houses,	77	138
Agrarian outrages,	1495	3462
Offences, violent—total,	3102	5281

The great majority of these offence were committed upon the peasantry or factors, the persons and dwellings of the gentlemen having been comparatively untouched.—Lord St Germains' *Speech*, 24th Feb. 1846; *Ann. Reg.*, 1846, p. 124. And of the savage unrelenting cruelty with which they were attended, an instance is given in *Sir R. Peel's Memoirs*: "A man and his wife of the name of Juthill, residing between Drumonod and Molill, were, early on the morning of the 7th, visited by a party of six men armed with guns and bayonets; and having beaten the husband till he was senseless, they stripped his wife and *put her on her back over some fire which they raked out of the fire-place for the purpose*. This was for an agrarian cause; and so intimidated are the sufferers, that although it is supposed they know perfectly well the perpetrators of the outrage, they *refrain from giving evidence*."—*Sir Charles O'Donnell's Memoir*, June 15, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 303. With truth did the Duke of Wellington say, when endorsing this report, with many similar facts, to Sir R. Peel: "I am aware that the facts therein reported could not be prevented by the Assassination Bill; but they tend to show the state of society in Ireland, which *is in fact worse than it is in any of the wildest parts of Asia, Africa, or America*."—Duke of Wellington to Sir R. Peel, June 21, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 302.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

the restrictions of the Act. By this Act all persons within the proclaimed district were forbidden, under pain of the penalties of misdemeanour, to leave their houses between sunrise and sunset, and the Government was authorised to station an additional constabulary force at the expense of the disturbed district. The bill also authorised the Lord-Lieutenant to award a reasonable compensation to the family or representatives of a murdered person. It was stated that the vast majority of the outrages were directed against individuals on account of private vengeance or hopes of intimidation, and that they were mainly owing to the infernal system of secret societies. Sir R. Peel said, with truth, that these societies had gone such a length "that there are many parts of Ireland in which no man's life is safe, *except indeed the life of an assassin.*"* So evident was the necessity of the measure, that it met with no resistance, but, on the contrary, the most cordial support, from the Opposition in the House of Peers. Lord Lansdowne "could not think of offering any opposition to a measure so imperatively called for at the present moment. He hoped it would be followed up by measures of permanent amelioration;" while Lord Brougham thought "the case was so urgent that the bill should be passed with the least possible delay." It passed the Lords, accordingly, without a division, its duration being merely restricted to 1st October 1849, instead of five years, as originally proposed.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvii.953, 957; Ann. Reg. 1846, 124, 126.

71. Coalition of parties against the Government.

The fate of the bill, however, was widely different in the Lower House, where the vehement strife produced by the forcing through of the corn-law repeal had produced an ulcerated feeling in the minds of the Protectionists, which predisposed them to go into any coalition, how adverse soever to their principles, which might afford them an opportunity of manifesting their spleen against the Government. It was no easy matter, however, either

* Sir R. Peel to Duke of Wellington, June 23, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 306.

for them or the Whigs, to form an alliance with any show even of decency to oppose the measure, for both were pledged as deep as men could be to support it. The Conservatives had been the first to introduce coercion bills into Ireland, and one of the most efficient of them had been brought in by Sir R. Peel when Secretary for Ireland, and carried through by the whole strength of the Tory party then in power. Lord Grey had followed this example in 1834, and introduced a coercion bill attended with the most surprising good effects, in which he obtained the cordial support of the Conservative opposition.[1] More lately, Lord Morpeth had, in 1835, introduced a modified coercion bill, which also, whenever it was put in force, had produced the effect of stopping the progress of agrarian outrage. Now, however, these two opposite parties, animated by a common hatred of the Ministry, resolved to form a coalition to throw out the bill, the one in punishment of what they regarded as past treachery, the other in the hope of future accession to power. When these were the motives which led to this coalition, it is of little consequence what arguments were adduced either in support of or against the bill, for on both sides the speakers for a long time carried to perfection the maxim of Talleyrand, that the principal object of language is to conceal the thought.

[1] Ante, c. xxxi. §§ 31, 44.

72. Progress of the bill.

The bill was introduced into the Lower House by Sir James Graham on the 3d March, and, from the very first, experienced the most determined opposition. Leave was given to bring it in by a majority of 39, it being understood that no serious resistance was to be made till the second reading. The whole Catholic party, of course, denounced the bill from the first as uncalled for and tyrannical in the highest degree; and the debate was carried on with such acrimony, that, after repeated adjournments, it was only brought to a first reading on 1st May when it was carried by 149, the numbers being 274 to 125. The second reading stood for the 25th May, but, from the

March 3.

May 1.

CHAP. XLII.

1846. May 25.

pressure of the corn-law debate, it was successively adjourned till the 9th of June, when it came on, and after repeated debates, was brought to a close on the 25th. During the course of the protracted debate, it became very evident that a coalition of parties to eject the Ministry had taken place, and as the end approached the real feelings of the opposite sides oozed out, notwithstanding every effort to conceal them, and the discussion was far more on the repeal of the Corn Laws than on the Irish Coercion Bill. A brief summary of the arguments formally adduced, however, is necessary, in order to show on which side the preponderance really lay, on this, as it had now become, momentous question.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 959, 1018; Ann. Reg. 1846, 134, 137.

73. Argument in support of the bill.

On the one hand, it was argued by Sir R. Peel, Sir James Graham, and the Solicitor-General: "The measure now proposed is undoubtedly a harsh one, and Government makes no attempt to vindicate it, except on the grounds of absolute necessity, but that necessity is unhappily too apparent. 1st, The extent, frequency, and nature of the crimes committed, indicates a necessity for a change of the law as it stands. 2d, The whole powers of the existing law have been tried and exhausted without affording any remedy to the evils. 3d, There is every reason to hope that the present bill will prove effectual in repressing the disorders existing, and which, in some places, have attained such a deplorable height. These disorders are not universal; they are confined to particular districts; but in them they have become such as to have entirely paralysed the arm of the law as it stands, and established, practically speaking, an entire impunity for crimes of the most atrocious description. It is not merely the number of offences, but the paucity of convictions, which is the alarming circumstance; but this disproportion has now risen to such a height in the disturbed counties as absolutely to call for the interposition of the legislature.

"The agrarian outrages are chiefly met with in five

counties, viz.—Tipperary, Clare, Roscommon, Limerick, and Leitrim. The population of those five counties, according to the last census, was 1,412,000 souls, while that of all Ireland is 8,175,124. Nevertheless, while the homicides in the whole country in 1845 were 92, in those five counties they were 47. The nightly firing into houses in those counties were seven-tenths of those in the whole country—proportions far beyond what the respective numbers of the inhabitants could warrant. Thus, when crime has so much increased in those counties, has the vigour of the criminal law and the conviction of offenders kept pace with the increase in crime? Quite the reverse: the ratio of convictions has come to be in the inverse ratio of the crimes. In these five counties, in 1845, the number of indictable offences was 1188, while the convictions were only 54! In Roscommon, within the last five months, no less than 383 indictable offences had been committed, and 8 convictions only obtained! If a special commission were now sent down to that county, what would be the result? Why, that nineteen-twentieths of the prisoners would walk away from the bar—a triumph to the malefactors—a reproach to the innocent sufferers under their crimes! Not less than 1100 or 1200 families in that county alone are living in daily dread of assassination; they know their enemies; they are aware from where they may expect outrages, but they dare not give information for fear of precipitating their fate. It may be safely affirmed that there is no other country in the civilised world where such a state of things would be suffered to exist.

74. Continued.

"In former times similar local outrages have risen to great height in various places; but they were uniformly and effectually repressed by coercion bills similar to the present. Every one knows the immediate and signal success with which Earl Grey's coercion bill in 1833 was attended, which in four months reduced the number of serious agrarian offences to one-fourth of their former amount; and the

75. Continued.

CHAP. XLII.

1846.

same may be said of the next coercion bill, which was found to be indispensable after the expiry of the first, and was brought in by Lord Morpeth. In 1835 all crimes of an insurrectionary character had ceased, but those of an agrarian kind had multiplied to such a degree, that in that year they amounted to the enormous number of 10,229. No sooner, however, was Lord Morpeth's coercion bill passed than the number began to decline, and when that Act expired in 1840 they were only 4069. With the expiry of the Act, however, they again increased, until in 1845 they had reached 8095.* It is impossible to resist the conclusion from these facts, that, however adverse to British ideas of mild administration, such rude methods of coercion are indispensable in the lawless and savage state which unhappily prevails in some parts of Ireland. And accordingly, though universal in its power, the bill is intended to be only partial in its operation, and to be enforced only in those counties where the extreme prevalence of crime calls upon the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim the Act. And experience warrants the hope, that the knowledge that the Executive is armed with these extraordinary powers, will have the effect of itself arresting the disorders, without the necessity of actually putting them in execution.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 1015; Ann. Reg. 1846, 142.

76. Concluded.

"If present appearances are looked to, the prospect is still more alarming, and ample proof of its necessity has been furnished since the Act was introduced into the Upper House five months ago. The gentlemen opposite always refer to the *total* commitments for crime over all Ireland, and because from the general prosperity which

* Agrarian Crimes in Ireland.

Coercion Act passed.		Coercion Bill not renewed.	
1835,	10,229	1841,	5,370
1836,	8,067	1842,	6,535
1837,	6,760	1843,	5,870
1838,	4,945	1844,	6,327
1839,	4,626	1845,	8,095
1840,	4,069		
Act expired.			

—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxxvii. 1015.

prevails, and the vast extension of the demand for labour which the construction of railways in Great Britain has afforded, there has been on the whole no increase, perhaps rather a decrease, of crime, they immediately arrive at the conclusion that the measure now proposed is unnecessary. But that is a most erroneous view of the case. The disease is local; at present it is confined to five counties; but there are no causes in operation there which do not exist in the rest of Ireland, and the malady is so fearful where it has appeared, that there is no saying how soon, if unchecked, it may spread over the whole country. In the first five months of this year (1846) as compared with the corresponding months of 1845, there is a great increase in those five counties; and the total of serious outrages in those five counties in the first five months of 1846 is no less than 2098.* If the same proportion should go on during the whole year, there will be a total of agrarian outrages in this year of 3013 against 2026 last year. The evil, therefore, though local, is fearful and rapidly increasing, and it behoves Parliament instantly to step in and apply that remedy which in former times has been found to be so efficacious."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 426; Speech of Sir R. Peel.

On the other hand it was answered by Lord John

* Grave Agrarian Offences in Tipperary, Clare, Roscommon, Limerick, and Leitrim.

	First Five Months of 1845.	First Five Months of 1846.
Homicides,	20	28
Firing at person,	40	41
Serious assaults,	85	121
Assaults to danger of life,	41	53
Firing into houses,	46	68

Insurrectionary Offences in same Counties.

	Whole of 1845.	First Five Months of 1846.
In Tipperary,	814	368
„ Limerick,	282	248
„ Clare,	271	189
„ Roscommon,	659	471
„ Leitrim,	804	164
In whole year,	2830	In five months, 1440

—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxvii. 423, 427.

CHAP. XLII. 1846. 77. Answer of the Coalition against the bill.

Russell, Mr Disraeli, Lord George Bentinck, and Mr O'Connell, who, strange to say, stood side by side on this occasion: "Without disputing the existence of crime and outrage in some parts of Ireland, the real question before the House is, whether this bill is calculated to afford a remedy for them. If it was so, it would be entitled to the hearty support of the house. But if the real state of Ireland is looked to, it will be seen that a coercion act is indeed required for Ireland; but it is not one to restrain the peasantry from committing crime, but one to compel the landlords to do their duty. Government have the power in their hands, and if they would only take a manly tone, and adopt a temperate and dignified estimate of human nature with respect to Ireland, they might wave the wand that would turn her misery and poverty into prosperity and happiness. The disorders which are put forward as the justification of this coercive measure originate in the nature of the land tenure, and the anomalous relation between the landlord and tenant. There is in Ireland what is called the "starving season," which is about six weeks before the new harvest, and if during that period the growing crops are distrained, the labourers are deprived of their means of subsistence. They are prevented from digging; if their wives or children come out in the evening to take a few potatoes they are driven to jail, the husbands are driven to madness. Can it be wondered at that such a state of things is a fruitful source of crime,—of crime, too, which did not exist in Ireland before the Union, but which is distinctly traceable to the exorbitant and unjust privileges conferred on Irish landlords by the English parliament? These causes of evil this coercion bill will not remove. Similar bills have been tried in Ireland, *seventeen times*, and they have always failed and left the country worse than it was before.

"The real remedies for Ireland are to be found, not in a coercion bill, but in the removal of the causes which have

produced the disorders. These measures consist in an adjustment of the tenure of land, so as to secure the tenant an equitable compensation for his improvements, a modification of the whole ejectment bill to check the wholesale clearance system, the extension to all Ireland of the local Tenant-Right in Ulster, a modification of the Grand Jury Law, an increased Reform in Parliament, adequate Corporation Reform, and a better distribution of Church property. Uniformly it has been found that the number of murders in Ireland is in proportion to the number of ejectments; and when it is recollected that 7,000,000 out of the 8,200,000 persons in Ireland live by agriculture, it may well be conceived what unbounded misery these wholesale ejectments occasion. It appears from the report of the Land Commission that from 1839 to 1843 no less than 150,000 persons had been subjected to the ejectment process. Imagination cannot figure the suffering which these ejections have occasioned. The serious crimes all originate in them; political feeling has nothing to do with them. They will never be eradicated, or even permanently checked, till the causes which have produced them are removed.

78. Continued.

"The House of Commons has done too much for the Irish landlords, and too little for the tenants. The old English statutes in favour of landlords had not been re-enacted in Ireland under its old legislature; but by the 56 Geo. III., c. 88, passed after the Union, these powers were at once transferred to them. This statute, for the first time, gave them the power of distraining growing crops, keeping them till ripe, and selling them when ready for the sickle, charging upon the unhappy tenant all the intermediate expenses. There never was a more fertile source of murder and outrage than those powers. This was followed by the 58 Geo. III., c. 39, conferring upon the landlord the power of ejecting the tenant, thus ruined, from his holding, the sole means of subsistence he had upon earth. The 1 Geo. IV., c. 41, still farther extended

79. Continued.

CHAP. XLII. 1841.

the powers of civil bill ejectments; and the 1 Geo. IV., c. 88, enabled them, in ejectments, to compel the tenant to find security for expense. Finally, the 1 & 2 William IV., c. 31, gave the landlord the right of immediate execution in ejectments, which still farther facilitated these ejectments. All enactments are in favour of the landlords; and it is in them, joined to the refusal to recognise the tenant's right to compensation for improvements, that the real sources of the outrages so much complained of in the south of Ireland are to be found. Accordingly, in Ulster, where this right is partially recognised, these outrages are, comparatively speaking, unknown. Remove these causes of evil, and violent crime will speedily die out of itself; continue them, and twenty coercion bills will never eradicate it.*

80. Concluded.

"The statistics so much relied on, on the other side, in reality prove nothing bearing on the present question. They demonstrate, indeed, in five counties an increase of predial outrages; but they by no means establish the necessity for any general measure of coercion, such as is now brought forward. On the contrary, so far as they prove anything they do directly the reverse. From May to July 1845 the amount of predial crime over all Ireland was considerably greater than from September to December.† In the first five months of 1845, the violent crimes amounted to 786; in the first five months of the present year they were only 554. The very crimes which this bill was intended to arrest have exhibited a falling off: in the first five months of last year they were 1701; in the corresponding five of this year they were 1356, exhibiting a diminution of 25 per cent in less than

* The two last paragraphs are from Mr O'Connell's able and instructive argument.—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxv. 524, 526.

† Predial Offences in Ireland.

1845.		1845.	
May,	823	November,	667
June,	896	December,	603
July,	708		

the first half of this year. Is this a state of things which warrants a measure of surpassing severity to last for a course of years? When the Ministers introduced it in the House of Lords, in February last, they described it as a temporary measure to meet a temporary emergency; and now, after the expiration of five months, they still press it forward after the emergency has passed away."[1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxiv. 178, 179—lxxxv. 524, 527.

81. The bill is thrown out by a majority of 73.

During the progress of this important debate, which dragged its weary length along by repeated adjournments in the House of Commons, Ministers had frequent consultations as to the course which they should pursue in the event of the bill being rejected, which every day appeared to be more probable. The coalition between the Whigs, Radicals, and extreme Protectionists, to throw out the bill, and overturn the Ministry, had become evident, and it was more than doubtful whether all the influence of Government, and the popularity of its chief, would be able to withstand it. The Free-traders, with Mr Cobden at their head, voted *against him*, in return for his adoption of their principles; that gentleman, at the same time, "tendering him his heartfelt thanks for the unwearied perseverance, the unswerving firmness, and the great ability with which he had, during the last six months, conducted through the House of Commons one of the most magnificent reforms ever carried through in any country." Lord George Bentinck and the Marquess of Granby, the representatives of the ducal houses of Portland and Rutland, led the band of Protectionists, eighty in number, who voted against the Ministry; Lord Chandos headed a body of one hundred who voted with them. Intense interest was felt in the house and the galleries, as the division took place, and the opponents of the measure filed off, for the Conservative party was entirely broken up, and no one could predict, with anything like certainty, how the division would turn out.

* The last paragraph is from Lord George Bentinck's speech.—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxiv. 178, 179.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

The result, however, was more decisive than the most sanguine of the coalition could have anticipated, for there appeared 219 for Ministers, and 292 against them, leaving them in a minority of SEVENTY-THREE. By a singular coincidence, two hours before this decisive vote took place in the House of Commons, the Lords had passed the Corn-Law Repeal Bill; so that Sir R. Peel's greatest triumph and his fall occurred on the same night, and within a few hours of each other.[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 1021, 1027; Peel's Mem. ii. 298, 302.

82. Mr Disraeli's account of the scene.

Great and unexpected as this majority was, it was rendered still more decisive and galling to Sir R. Peel by the character of the men of whom it was composed. The scene has been thus recounted by the hand of a master, himself one of the principal actors in the mighty drama which was now performed. "It was not their numbers merely," says Mr Disraeli, "that attracted the anxious observation of the Treasury Bench, as the Protectionists passed in defile before the Minister to the hostile lobby. It was impossible that he could have marked them without emotion; the flower of that great party, which had been so proud to follow one who had been so proud to lead them. They were men to gain whose hearts, and the hearts of their fathers, had been the aim and exultation of his life. They had extended to him an unlimited confidence, and an admiration without stint. They had stood by him in the darkest hour, and had borne him from the depths of political despair to the proudest of living positions. Right or wrong, they were men of honour, breeding, and refinement,

* "Two hours after the intelligence arrived that the Lords had passed the Corn and Customs Bills, we were ejected from power; and by another coincidence as marvellous, on the day on which I had to announce, in the House of Commons, the dissolution of the Government, the news arrived that we had settled the Oregon question, and that our proposals had been accepted by the United States without the alteration of a word. . . . . Lady Peel and I are here quite alone, in the loveliest weather, feasting on solitude and repose; and I have every disposition to forgive my enemies for having conferred upon me the blessing of the loss of power."—Sir R. PEEL to LORD HARDINGE, Drayton Manor, July 4, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 310.

high and generous character, great weight and station in the country, which they had for ever placed at his disposal. They had not only been his followers, but his friends; had joined in the same pastimes, drank from the same cup, and in the pleasantness of private life had often forgotten together the cares and strife of politics. He must have felt something of this while the Mannerses, the Somersets, the Bentincks, the Lowthers, and the Lennoxes passed before him. And these were the 'gentlemen of England,' of whom, but five years ago, the very same building was ringing with his pride of being the leader."[1]

[1] Disraeli's Life of Lord George Bentinck, 299.

83. Sir R. Peel resolves to resign.

Two courses, and two only, were open to Sir R. Peel after this defeat. The first was, to dissolve Parliament, and try the fortune of a new election; the second, to resign office. The first course promised no advantages; on the contrary, a certain accumulation of evils. It was impossible to expect that a Conservative majority could be obtained equal to that which brought him into power in 1841; on the contrary, it was certain it would be very much diminished. A great many of the English county constituencies would turn against one who they thought had betrayed them; all the Irish, which returned Liberal members, would unite against a Minister who threatened them with a coercion bill. Lavish in their praises of him for having adopted their principles, the Free-traders would be the first to vote against him if he retained office; the Whigs had cordially coalesced with the Protectionists to throw him out, and bring themselves in. Influenced by these considerations, Sir R. Peel, with the entire concurrence of the Duke of Wellington, wisely resolved to retire; and on the 29th June, these two illustrious men announced, in the Lords and Commons respectively, that they held office only till their successors were appointed. It was the LAST TIME either addressed the house as the leaders of the Government.[2]*

[2] Ann. Reg. 1846, 152; Sir R. Peel's Cabinet Memorandum, June 21, 1846; Mem. ii. 288, 292.

* "In my opinion, the loss of the Irish bill, by whatever means, recommended as that bill was by the Speech from the Throne, declared to be abso-

CHAP. XLII.

1846.

Sir R. Peel's concluding address.

"In proposing the measures of commercial policy," said Sir R. Peel, "which have disentitled them to the confidence of those who have hitherto given them their support, Government had no other desire but to promote the good of the country. Our object was to avert dangers which we thought were imminent, and to avoid a conflict which we believed would place in hostile collision great and powerful classes in this country. The love of power was not their motive; for I was well aware that, whether accompanied by failure or success, one event must necessarily occur, and that was, the termination of the existence of the Government. I admit that the withdrawal of the confidence of many of our friends was the natural consequence of the measures we proposed; and I do think, when measures of that kind are proposed, at variance with the course heretofore proposed by Ministers, the natural consequence is an expulsion from office. I therefore do not complain of it; anything is preferable to attempting to maintain ourselves in office without the confidence of this house. There has been a combination which, together with the influence of Government, has carried through these measures. But there is a name which ought to be associated with their success; but it is neither the name of the noble lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), nor is it mine. Sir, the name which ought to

lutely necessary by the Queen's Ministers, sanctioned almost with unanimity by the House of Lords,—the loss of the Irish bill will make the administration of Government in Ireland impossible, because discreditable, by the present executive. There is an Irish party, a determined and not insignificant one, in whom British indignation has no terrors. Their wish is to disgust England with Irish objects and Irish members, and to induce England, through sheer disgust, and the sense of public inconvenience, from the obstructions offered to all other business in Parliament, to listen to the repeal of the legislative union, for the purpose of purging the House of a set of troublesome and factious members, who equally obstruct legislation for Ireland and Great Britain. In presence of such a party, the loss of the bill will be a signal triumph over the Executive, not merely of the Repealers, but of the disturbers of the public peace, and promoters of assassination throughout Ireland. I think, therefore, we ought not to submit to the rejection or the defeat by other means than rejection of the Irish bill."—Sir R. PEEL's *Cabinet Memorandum*, June 21, 1846.—*Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 291, 292.

be, and which will be, associated with the success of those measures, is the name of a man who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has advocated their cause with untiring energy, and by appeals to reason, enforced by an eloquence the more to be admired that it was unaffected and unadorned—the name that ought to be, and will be associated with them, is that of Richard Cobden.'

85. Concluded.

"I shall now close the address which it has been my duty to make, thanking the house sincerely for the favour with which they have listened to this my last address in my official capacity. Within a few hours the power I have held for five years will have passed into the hands of another. I say it without repining, and with a more lively recollection of the support I have received than the opposition I have encountered. I shall, I fear, leave office with a name severely censured by many honourable men, who, on public principle, deeply lament the severance of party ties, not from any selfish or interested motive, but because they believe fidelity to party, and the existence of great parties, to be powerful instruments of good government. I shall surrender power, severely censured by many honourable men, who, from no interested motives, have adhered to the principles of Protection, because they looked upon them as important to the welfare and interests of the country. I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist, who, professing honourable opinions, would maintain protection for his own individual benefit. But it may be that I shall be sometimes remembered with goodwill in those places which are the abodes of men whose lot it is to labour and earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow; in such places, perhaps, my name may be remembered with expressions of goodwill, when those who inhabit them recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because no longer leavened with a sense of injustice."[1]

[1] 1 Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 1054, 1056; Ann. Reg. 1846, 157, 159.

CHAP. XLII.

1846.

86. Reflections on his free-trade measures.

These were manly words and noble sentiments, bearing the signet-mark of earnestness and sincerity, and worthy of a great minister taking for the last time the leave of the government of a great people. Yet must the truth of history take something from the brilliancy of the picture, and present the measures which he introduced, and which occasioned his fall, not in the impassioned words of earnest oratory, but in the sober guise of experienced truth. Such a survey will take nothing from the estimate which justice must ever form of the sincerity of the motives and the disinterestedness of the feelings by which the course was actuated, but add much to the difficulties with which its expedience is surrounded.

87. Was a return to the Corn Laws, after the famine was over, practicable?

From what has been said, it is evident that the question, whether the permanent repeal of the Corn Laws, when carried through by Sir R. Peel in 1846, was or was not justifiable *on the reasons which he assigned,* depends entirely on the point, whether or not it was possible, after a temporary suspension of those laws, to have reverted to them when the danger had blown over. There may be difference of opinion on the question whether the potato rot in 1845-6 was so formidable in Ireland as to have rendered necessary the temporary suspension of the import duties; but there can be none whatever, that in the succeeding year the evil had extended to such a degree, and acquired such dimensions, as rendered an entire suspension of all import duties, at least for the time, indispensable. The real question, therefore, is, whether this temporary suspension rendered a lasting repeal unavoidable? Sir R. Peel maintains it did, because, he says, the nation having once tasted of the blessings of free trade in grain, would never go back to Protection; though he admitted there was no cry for repeal then among the working classes, and an entire want of excitement on the subject among them. There does not appear to be any ground for this opinion. The

sliding-scale had repeatedly, during the last fifteen years, reduced the import duties to 1s., especially in 1841, when wheat was at 80s.; but no difficulty whatever had been experienced in enforcing the enhanced duties when prices fell. In former times, temporary suspensions of the Corn Laws, to meet temporary scarcities, had repeatedly taken place, and on their termination no difficulty had been felt in reverting to the protective duties.* This reason, therefore, put forward by the Premier for making the change permanent, in consequence of a passing calamity, was obviously ill founded. Whether or not the alteration had become unavoidable from a different cause—viz. the growing preponderance in the legislature, as framed by the Reform Bill, of the commercial interests over the agricultural—is a very different question, open to much more variety of opinion, but which, however strongly felt in secret, was not in public put forward as a justification of the lasting change.

88. The danger of scarcity had passed away before the bill was brought forward.

In truth, long before the Corn-Law Repeal Bill had passed into a law, not only was the necessity of any change after the lapse of years, so far as it arose from any real or supposed scarcity, passed away, but the terrors even of immediate want were found to have been extremely exaggerated. So early as 13th January, before the bill was introduced into Parliament, the Duke of Wellington had called Sir R. Peel's attention to the important fact, that the price of potatoes in Ireland at that period *was only 6d. a cwt. dearer than the average*

* "In December 1756 Parliament met, and passed an Act discontinuing, for a limited period, the importation duties. In 1767 wheat was at 57s. 4d., and the first act of the session was one allowing the importation of wheat and wheat-flour, oats and oatmeal, rye and rye-meal, into this kingdom, for a limited period, free of duty. At those periods importation was prohibited when wheat was below 57s. 4d., and from that to 80s. it was admissible at a duty of 8s. In 1791 a change in the import duties took place, and in 1793 an Act passed permitting the importation of wheat and flour at the low duties. In 1795 an Act was passed permitting, for a limited time, the importation of corn free of duty; and the same was done in 1799, the price being then 69s."—Sir R. PEEL'S *Cabinet Memorandum*, Nov. 29, 1846; *Memoirs*, ii. 189, 190.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

of the eight preceding years—a state of things inconsistent, not merely with famine, but even serious scarcity.* Dr Lyon Playfair, and the Commissioners sent over to inquire into the subject in November preceding, had reported that half the crop had perished; but though this was the case in some districts, it was far from being so generally. Wheat fell in January from 60s., which it had reached at the height of the panic, to 55s.; and the judicious measures adopted by Government for the introduction of Indian corn produced so abundant a supply, that even in June following, always the most trying time in Ireland, the local authorities reported "that there is still abundance of provisions in the country; the markets, considering all things, are well supplied and reasonable; and the forethought and wise measures of Government with regard to the Indian meal are daily producing their desired effects. The coming crops look favourably, and promise more than an average harvest. A continuance of this system of relief for the next six weeks or two months will ward off the distress, famine, and destitution at one time so much apprehended."[1] It is evident, therefore, that the apprehensions entertained of a general scarcity, even of potatoes, had been unfounded; and the crop of oats everywhere had been immense. This state of things was quite consistent with very great distress, loudly calling for Government interposition in particular places; but that was not because food, on the whole, was awanting, but because, the produce of their little possessions having failed, the people had no money to buy it.[2] The remedy for this was not a prospective and remote repeal of the Corn Laws, but an immediate impulse to the

[1] Colonel O'Donnell to the Military Secretary, Dublin, June 15, 1846; Peel's Mem. ii. 304.

[2] Peel's Memoirs, ii. 304, 306.

* "In eight years, from 1838 to 1846, the price of potatoes in Dublin markets has varied from 3s. to 4s. per cwt.; the average prices for eight years being 3s. 6½d. per cwt. The price at Christmas 1845 was 4s. the cwt., not quite 6d. the cwt. above the average price for the eight years from 1838. This is worthy of attention."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON to SIR R. PEEL, Jan. 13, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 264.

wages of labour by Government employment, and when this was afforded, entire relief was experienced.*

1846. 89.

If, from the reasons of immediate necessity put forward in support of the repeal of the Corn Laws, we pass to the more durable reasons founded on the state of the public mind on the subject, and the strength of the monied and manufacturing interest in the House of Commons, we shall see much stronger reasons to consider it as a measure which could not be much longer delayed by any Government. In truth, the demand for it arose from the silent change of time; and the existence of that demand was an indication that the time had arrived when nature intended it should be granted. The very riches of Great Britain, which had grown up during a century and a half of protection, had raised the wages of labour so much in it, owing to the affluence of money from all quarters of the globe, that the manufacturers felt the necessity of some lasting reduction of wages, to enable them to compete with foreign artisans either in the foreign or the home market. The inhabitants of towns, whose gains had been seriously diminished by the monetary policy of Government, sighed for the comparatively cheap supplies of food enjoyed by the inhabitants of poorer foreign states. That very monetary policy, and the system of free trade introduced along with it, had been a part of the great design of *cheapening everything*, intended to obviate the effects of the accumulation of wealth in a particular State, and the final burdens with which such accumulation is invariably, after a time, attended. To these consuming classes, whose interests were directly adverse to those of the producing, the

Durable reasons for the repeal of the Corn Laws.

* "In many places, in the interval between seed-time and hay-harvest, a more than ordinary distress is felt by the cottars, especially in remote districts. In many places the want has been already anticipated, and met by the management of relief committees in donations, and the employment of the poor at public works. Where such arrangements have been made, crime has decreased, and the relief and advantages to the poor have been incalculable."—Col. O'Donnell to Military Secretary, Dublin, June 15, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 305.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

Reform Bill chiefly, by the destruction of the nomination boroughs, the seat of the latter's representation, had given a decided majority in the legislature. That very legislative preponderance was the result of the superior wealth, energy, and political organisation which had given them the victory in the Reform contest. The weight now acquired by the Anti-Corn-Law League was another instance of the same preponderance. Situated as he was in 1846, therefore, Sir R. Peel was right in his belief that the repeal of the Corn Laws ere long was unavoidable; for nearly all his urban supporters, who constituted his majority, were enlisted on its side. Whether *he* should have done it, recollecting his former professions, and what interest he was placed in power to support, is a very different question, on which probably the opinion of posterity will be as unanimous on the other side.

90. Real free-trade was not introduced, but protection taken from agriculture.

But be this as it may, one thing is perfectly clear, and that is, that it was anything but general free trade which Sir R. Peel introduced on this occasion; it was, on the contrary, a *retention of protection to the manufacturer, and a withdrawal of it from the farmer.* Wheat, after February 1849, was to be admitted at the nominal duty of 1s. a quarter, which, supposing wheat on an average to be at 50s., was a *fiftieth* part. But the protection retained for manufactured goods at the same time was not a fiftieth, but from a *tenth to a fifteenth* part, which was equivalent to what from 5s. to 7s. 6d. would have been on wheat. This is a most important distinction, which, in the heat of the controversy, has been well-nigh forgotten by the Protectionists, and has been studiously kept out of view by the Free-traders. It was, however, forcibly brought under Sir R. Peel's notice by Mr Goulburn when the corn-law repeal was first brought before the Cabinet.* Comfortably sheltered under protection,

* "From the immense amount of our debt, and charges imposed on every interest in the country, in respect of it, every manufacturer in this country has in justice a claim to be protected, as regards the supply of the home consumer

the manufacturers beheld with satisfaction, and greeted with applause, a policy which, for their benefit, as they thought, took it away entirely from the agriculturist. One would have supposed, from this, that the latter class had facilities for production, and peculiar advantages in competition with foreign states, which the former did not enjoy; whereas the fact was just the reverse. There is no steam-engine in the fields; coal and iron, all-powerful in manufacturing, are comparatively impotent in rural labour. We have heard much of the English manufacturers underselling those of Hindostan in cotton goods, but no one ever heard of English farmers underselling those of Poland, Moldavia, or America, in the produce of the fields. The removal of protection from agriculture, therefore, and retention of it to manufactures, was not free trade; it was a simple act of injustice to the former of these interests. It does not by any means follow from this, that, situated as the country and constituted as the House of Commons was at this crisis, it was not a matter of necessity to adopt this policy. But it does

against the competition of a foreigner, who, not having the same charges upon him, is or ought to be able to supply articles at a cheaper rate. On this principle you give cotton and linen manufacturers a protection of from 10 to 20 per cent; and to this extent, and on the same ground, I see no reason why corn should not be protected. Nay, has not corn, on the same principle, a *strong title to extra protection*, on account of the mode in which both the raw material and the manufactured article are both subject to duty? It appears from the *Report on Local Taxation* (p. 27), that local rates amount, on the whole of England and Wales, to 2s. 8d. in the pound of all real property. But while 2s. 8d. is the general rate on real property of every description, including houses, it will be found that in agricultural districts the rate in the pound is much greater. On an average the rent of land is not above 20s. an acre; therefore 2s. 8d. on the raw material is 13 per cent. Relieve him from this charge, and freedom of import would be less important."—MR GOULBURN'S Memorandum to SIR R. PEEL, November 30, 1846; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 205. It is a curious circumstance, that while he saw so clearly, and has so well expressed, the peculiar reason for protection to British agriculture which arises from the peculiar fiscal burdens to which it is subjected, from which the manufacturers are exempted, he made no mention of the *far stronger* claims for protection, arising from the high money-wages of labour in Britain, owing to the riches of the country and affluence of money, and the impossibility of capital and machinery obviating this inequality in agricultural as it can so successfully do in manufacturing industry.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

follow, that we may rest assured that any interest in the country, which, though neither the greatest nor the most powerful, has got the command of the legislature, will force through measures which it deems for its own peculiar benefit, without the slightest regard to their effects upon the interests of the other classes of the community, or even, in the end, of their own.

91. Strange conduct of the Irish members on the Corn Law question.

Another circumstance, which is worthy of particular notice in this great debate, is the part which the Irish popular and Roman Catholic members took regarding it. Being entirely an agricultural country, in which seven-eighths of the inhabitants, and nineteen-twentieths of the wealth, was obtained from rural labour, it is evident that its interests clearly were to support protection to agriculture. Manchester or Glasgow might have much to say on behalf of free trade in grain, because to them it promised to lessen the cost of living and of production; but what had Clare or Roscommon to say to it, whose produce was liable by it to be ruined by foreign competition? Accordingly, it stands proved by incontrovertible evidence, that within four years of the introduction of Free Trade, the produce of Ireland in wheat alone had declined by 1,500,000 quarters,* and that the grain of all kinds imported from that country into Great Britain had

* EXPORTS OF GRAIN FROM IRELAND.

Years.	Quarters—Of which, Wheat — Qrs.	Oats and Oatmeal. Qrs.
1845, . . .	3,251,901	779,113	2,353,985
1846, . . .	1,841,802	393,462	1,311,591
1847, . . .	963,779	184,222	703,462
1848, . . .	1,946,417	304,872	1,546,568
1849, . . .	1,426,397	233,445	1,122,067

—PORTER, p. 345.

From Captain Larcom's Report for 1849, it appears the production of wheat since 1845 had declined 1,500,000 quarters in Ireland. Since prices rose after 1852 there has been a corresponding increase. The potato famine had nothing to do with this decline in *cereal* crops, for they were not at all affected by the disease which was so fatal to the former; and as prices rose from this cause, the only effect of the failure of the potato crops and general rise of prices, should have been a great increase of cereal crops, and in particular of wheat. And the harvest of 1847 was so fine that, at Lord John Russell's suggestion, a general thanksgiving was returned for it.

declined from 3,251,000 quarters to 1,426,397. Nothing is more certain, therefore, than that, whatever it was to England and Scotland, free trade in grain was ruinous to Ireland; and it will immediately appear that the prodigious emigration which has, since it was introduced, banished above 2,000,000 Irish from the Emerald Isle, has been mainly owing to the cutting off of this the best market for their produce. Yet the change, fraught with such disastrous effects to Ireland, which were thoroughly foreseen and predicted at the time, was supported by the whole Roman Catholic party in the House of Commons, themselves for the most part representing Irish *counties*. Not a whisper escaped their constituents; not a qualm of remorse came over themselves for such suicidal conduct. The names of Daniel O'Connell, his sons, and followers, are to be seen in the majority in all the corn-law discussions.* It belongs to the biographers or friends of the leaders of that party to justify, if they can, such extraordinary conduct, which was obviously dictated by hatred of England, not love of Ireland, and revealed too clearly a secret foreign influence. Observe, they supported the absolute and lasting repeal, not a temporary suspension to meet a temporary calamity. To the historian it affords a melancholy example of the truth, that representative institutions afford no security whatever for good government, unless the constituents, as well as the representatives, are animated by a patriotic spirit, and alive to the real interests of their country, and that, under other circumstances, or when influenced by a foreign or sacerdotal influence, it may become one of the greatest evils which can afflict society.

If the conduct of the followers in Ireland of the Free-trade party is calculated to excite surprise, that of the leaders of the Protectionist in Great Britain appears, at first sight, to be hardly less so. The Duke of Welling-

* See in particular the divisions on the Corn Laws.—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxvi. 89, 721, and lxxxiv. 351.

CHAP. XLII.

1846.

92. The Duke of Wellington's characteristic conduct.

ton was clearly and strongly opposed to the repeal of the Corn Laws, and was the leader of the party in the Cabinet which, by refusing to accede to it, obliged Sir R. Peel to resign in December 1845.* The Duke of Buccleuch was the same.† Yet both these noblemen shortly after resumed office after Lord Stanley had seceded from it, on the understanding that the entire repeal of the Corn Laws was to be made a Cabinet question; and the former said emphatically in the House of Peers, that he was delighted with the Premier's resuming office on these conditions, and that he should, in his place, have done just the same.‡ This conduct appears to be very inconsistent with previous and strongly expressed opinions; but it is easily explained if the leading feature in the Duke of Wellington's character is considered—that is, fidelity to his Sovereign in difficulty. This duty

* "I am one of those who think the continuance of the Corn Laws essential to the agriculture of the country in its existing state, and a benefit to the whole community.

"I am afraid that it would soon be found that this country would cease to be sought after as the desirable market of the world, if the interests of agriculture should be injured by a premature repeal of the Corn Laws. It appears to me, likewise, that this country is in a better situation than any other to bear the shock arising from the potato disease, and this even in Ireland. The evil in Ireland is not a deficiency of food for the year, or even of the particular description of food, potatoes, but the great and supposed general deficiency of that spread of food operating upon the social condition of Ireland, the habits of the great body of the people, who are producers of the food which they consume during three-fourths of the year in general, and who must consequently be in a state of destitution, and who have not the pecuniary, and if they had the pecuniary means, are not in the habit of purchasing their food in the market."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S Memorandum, Nov. 30. 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 198, 199.

† "Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch, after anxious reflection, each declared his inability to support a measure involving the ultimate repeal of the Corn Laws."—*Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 221.

‡ "I was of opinion that the formation of a Government, in which her Majesty would have confidence, was of much greater importance than the opinions of any individual on the Corn Laws or on any other laws. My Lords, I received a letter from my right hon. friend, desiring me to attend a Cabinet Council that evening (Dec. 20), which I did. *I applauded the conduct of my right hon. friend: I was delighted with it.* It was exactly the course which I should have followed myself under similar circumstances, and therefore I determined, my Lords, to stand by him."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S *Speech*, Jan. 26, 1846; *Parl. Deb.*

the old soldier deemed paramount to every other; and situated as the Queen was, after Lord Stanley had declared his inability to form a Cabinet on Protection principles, and Lord J. Russell had failed in making one of the Whigs, he held that he was bound to support her even at the hazard of his own consistency. He thought the support of Sir R. Peel's government of more importance than the maintenance of any consistency, the adherence to any preconceived opinions; and he saw no way of doing this but by going into his views on the Corn Laws. The Duke of Buccleuch appears, in resuming office with Wellington, to have been actuated by the same views. We may lament that circumstances should have occurred which rendered such a deviation from principle unavoidable; but every one must see that circumstances may occur when it is at once the duty of the patriot and the path of honour to do so.*

93. This will not apply to Sir R. Peel.

But though these circumstances, joined to peculiar habits and a military life, may vindicate the Duke of Wellington for his sudden conversion on this subject, no similar apology can be admited for Sir R. Peel. *He created the necessity* to which the Duke of Wellington yielded. There was no earthly necessity for repealing the Corn Laws prospectively in January 1846, to take effect *three years after*, whatever there may have been to open the ports entirely by an Order in Council at the moment. The engrafting a permanent change of policy on a temporary calamity, was a gratuitous and uncalled-for measure on his part, which never should have been adopted but with the full concurrence of the party which had placed him in power. There was plenty of time to do so; he had three

* "My own judgment would lead me to support the Corn Laws. Sir R. Peel may think that his position in Parliament, and in the public view, requires that the course should be taken which he recommends, and if this should be the case, I earnestly recommend that the Cabinet should support him, and I for one declare that I will do so."—WELLINGTON'S Memorandum, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 200.

CHAP. XLII. 1846.

years to think of it and select his own opportunity for making the communication, and if not acquiesced in, resigning office without inconvenience to the Queen's service, and supporting Free Trade as a private individual. This is what the Duke of Wellington recommended.* Instead of doing this, he forced the whole question on at once; evidently taking advantage of the panic of the moment, to drive through a change which in cooler moments he despaired of effecting. This was clearly wrong. The mere change of opinion was, in itself, no ways blamable; often it is the highest indication of political sagacity, the last effort of political virtue. "*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*" is sometimes the maxim of integrity not less than discrimination. But it is one thing to change opinions when the former appear to have been erroneous, or alter conduct when it has become expedient to do so; it is another, and a very different thing, to betray a trust reposed by a party to whose support the acquisition of power has been owing. That is somewhat akin to what Marlborough did when he made use of the Guards, at whose head he had been placed by James, to establish William on the throne, or Ney when he left Paris to take the command of the royal army at Melun, promising to bring Napoleon back in an iron cage. Had he *resigned office, and then supported free-trade principles*, the Tories might have lamented his change of opinion, but they could not have assailed his honour. But no royal solicitation or state necessity will ever, in the eyes of posterity, vindicate a general who deserts his colours on the day of battle. The defection of Sir R. Peel from the principles of the party which placed him in power, while still retaining that power, is therefore a derelic-

* "I would recommend that in the Queen's Speech the Queen should recommend a reconsideration of the Corn Laws, with a view to a *suspension* of their provisions, if that measure should appear to be necessary; and such alterations in regard to certain articles of food as may appear to be desirable, and may not be inconsistent with the principle and object of the laws."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S Memorandum, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 201.

tion of duty which honour must ever lament, and will never imitate.*

94. What were the alleviating circumstances of his case?

But though justice must condemn Sir R. Peel's conduct in retaining office while he changed his principles, yet even here certain alleviating circumstances require to be taken into consideration. It was his fate to be called to direct the councils of his country at the critical time when its growth had terminated, when it had arrived at full maturity, and the causes of decline were beginning to operate. When the obstructing causes were to come into full play, was a mere question of time; no human power could permanently prevent their action any more than it could the silent change of summer into autumn. Sir R. Peel may have accelerated by a few years the adoption of free-trade principles by old and opulent England, but he did nothing more. Sooner or later they will always be embraced by a rich and aged community, in consequence of the action of the laws provided by nature to arrest the growth of aged communities. The

* The danger of the course on which he was adventuring was clearly explained to Sir R. Peel by Mr Goulburn. "The more," said he, "I reflect upon the observations which you made to me a few days since as to your difficulty in again defending a corn-law in Parliament, the more do I feel alarmed at the consequences of your taking a different course from that which you formerly adopted. An abandonment of your former opinions would, I think, now *prejudice your and our characters as public men*, and would be fraught with fatal results to the country's best interests; and as I probably hear many opinions on a subject of this kind which do not reach you, the view which I take of probable consequences may not be undeserving of your consideration. When the public feel, as I believe they do, great doubts as to the existence of an adequate necessity, when greater doubts still are entertained as to the applicability of an abandonment of the corn-law as a remedy for our present distress, the people will, I fear, tax us with treachery and deception, and charge us from our former language with having always had it in contemplation. I view with still greater alarm the effects of the proposed change upon the public interests. In my opinion, the party of which you are the head is the only barrier against the revolutionary effects of the Reform Bill. So long as that party remains unbroken, whether in or out of power, it has the means of doing much good, at least of preventing much evil. But if it be broken in pieces by a destruction of confidence in its leaders (and I cannot but think a destruction of the Corn Laws would produce that result), I see nothing before us but the exasperation of class animosities, a struggle for pre-eminence, and the ultimate triumph of unrestrained democracy."—MR GOULBURN to SIR R. PEEL, Nov. 30, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 201, 203.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

cry, "*Panem et Circenses*" has been heard in other realms than those of Imperial Rome; it is at bottom the same cry as that of cheap bread which convulsed Great Britain in these times. And without altogether exculpating the statesmen who were instrumental in giving to that cry the command of the State, it is but justice to them to recollect that the change, at least at no distant period, had been rendered necessary by general causes, and that its adoption was one of the great means provided by Nature for checking the growth of worn-out communities, and securing the extension and dispersion of mankind.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ENGLAND, FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF FREE TRADE AND FALL OF SIR R. PEEL IN JUNE 1846, TO THE SUPPRESSION OF THE CHARTIST INSURRECTION IN APRIL 1848.

1. Vast effects of the introduction of Free Trade.

THUS was Free Trade introduced, and the great Tory party split asunder by the act of its Protectionist chief! The effects of this change of policy and dislocation of parties have been great and decisive, and extended far beyond the lifetime or sphere of the persons who were instrumental in bringing it about. It has diffused, for a very long period, perhaps for ever, in Great Britain, a distrust in public men—a disbelief either in fixity of policy, or adherence to principle, in the rulers of the State. It has spread abroad the conviction that the ruling power in the commonwealth is no longer to be found in its aristocracy, either of rank, property, talents, or virtues; but that by a well-concerted and vigorous system of popular agitation, the whole of these influences may be overthrown, and Government become impracticable, except by the abandonment of pledges the most solemnly given, principles the most solemnly asserted, and concession to demands attended with the most obvious danger. It has entirely broken up and divided the great Tory party, which for half a century had ruled the empire, and withstood, both in arms and influence, the first French Revolution. It has introduced into that once firm and united body discord the most incurable, heart-burnings the most violent.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

Words were spoken on both sides which can never be forgiven; deeds done which can never be forgotten. When eighty Protectionists, the representatives of the old English aristocracy, followed Lord George Bentinck and Mr Disraeli into the hostile lobby on the division on the Irish Coercion Bill, the knell of the Tory party was rung, the rule of steady consistent party on either side came to an end, and the empire was handed over to successive coalitions of discordant interests, involving on all sides dereliction of principle, attended to none by durability of power.

2. Both the Whigs and the Tories were destroyed by their own leaders.

It is remarkable that the breaking up of the two great parties which have alternately ruled the State ever since the Revolution was in neither case owing to the hostility of its opponent, however ably directed or perseveringly applied. It was neither Mr Pitt nor Lord Castlereagh that overturned the Whigs; it was not Mr Fox or Mr Burke that paralysed the Tories. From the assaults of those great men, strongly supported as they were, their opponents on both sides entirely recovered, and they never were so powerful as after those periods when the strife had been most violent. Witness Mr Pitt in 1784, after the desperate struggle with the Coalition; Earl Grey in 1832, after the close of the long-continued strife consequent on the French Revolution. Even the Reform Bill, however skilfully directed to that end, did not destroy the Tory party; the Opposition was never so united or so ably led as from 1835 to 1841 when guided by Sir R. Peel, the Government never so powerful as when he came into power in the close of the latter year. The Whigs as a party were destroyed by the Reform Bill, forced through the Lords by their powerful leaders at the head of the whole democracy of the empire; the Tories as a party were destroyed by Sir R. Peel, when at the head of the Government, and supported by a majority so large as promised them a lease of power for an unlimited period. Earl Grey's triumph terminated the ascendancy of the old Whig

families which had so long ruled the State, and substituted in its room that of a coalition of English urban Liberals, Scotch Radicals, and Irish Catholics; Sir R. Peel's return to power with a majority of 91 was the herald of the dissolution of the great and united party which he had so long and ably headed, and its severance into angry, soured Protectionists, too weak to form a government, and wavering Liberal Conservatives, eminent in talent, but without followers sufficient to give them any pretensions to be a ruling party. CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

3. Causes which led to these changes.

Without doubt this strange and anomalous result is to be ascribed in some degree to the pressure of external circumstances. The growing wealth and importance of the commercial portion of the nation called for an enlarged admission of their representatives into the legislature, as it did for a certain modification of the duties on the admission of food and necessary articles of subsistence. So far, a concession was necessary in both cases. But the amount and measure of the concession were in both voluntary, and the authors of the changes are responsible for their effects. Both were precipitated, and rendered unavoidable, by the previous acts of the very Ministers who introduced them; both were forced on by the power which they respectively wielded, in utter ignorance of their effects. The Reform Bill was first rendered a national object of desire from the effect of the long-continued declamations of the Whigs and Liberals at the former representation of interests and classes; and it was rendered so broad and sweeping, from Earl Grey seriously and in good faith anticipating from it effects diametrically the reverse of those with which it was actually attended. The demand for the repeal of the Corn Laws was mainly owing to the monetary system which had been in operation for a quarter of a century, which, by halving the remuneration for every species of industry, had swelled into a passion the desire for a corresponding reduction in the price of food; and to the conduct of Sir R. Peel himself, who, by applying the

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

principles of Free Trade to inferior articles, rendered irresistible the cry for its extension to the principal staples of human consumption. Not less than the great alteration in the structure of the constitution, this social change was forced through by him in direct opposition to the wishes of his party and his own former professions, and in such complete ignorance of its effects, that, before many years had elapsed, it had induced evils of a far more serious and irremediable kind than those it was intended to remove. The commencement of these evils forms the interesting and instructive subject of the present chapter.

4. Formation of the new Cabinet.

As a matter of course, the Queen, upon the resignation of Sir R. Peel, for whom she had conceived the highest esteem, sent for Lord John Russell, and he experienced much less difficulty in forming a Cabinet than on the last similar occasion Lord Melbourne had done.* Lord John

* THE WHIG GOVERNMENT, AS NOW REARRANGED.

Cabinet.

First Lord of the Treasury,	Lord J. Russell.
Lord-Chancellor,	Lord Cottenham.
President of the Council,	Marquis of Londonderry.
Lord Privy Seal,	Earl of Minto.
Home Office,	Sir G. Grey.
Foreign Office,	Viscount Palmerston.
Colonial Office,	Earl Grey.
Chancellor of the Exchequer,	Sir C. Wood.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,	Lord Campbell.
Paymaster-General,	Mr Macaulay.
Woods and Forests,	Lord Morpeth.
Postmaster-General,	Lord Clanricarde.
Board of Trade,	Earl of Clarendon.
Board of Control,	Sir J. Hobhouse.
Secretary for Ireland,	Mr Labouchere.
First Lord of the Admiralty,	Earl of Auckland.

Not in the Cabinet.

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland,	Earl of Besborough.
Secretary at War,	Fox Maule, Esq.
Commander-in-Chief,	Duke of Wellington.
Master-General of the Ordnance,	Marquess of Anglesea.
Master of the Mint,	R. L. Shiel, Esq.
Attorney-General,	Sir J. Jervis.
Solicitor-General,	Sir D. Dundas.
Lord-Advocate of Scotland,	And. Rutherford, Esq.
Solicitor-General,	Thos. Maitland, Esq.

—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxvii. 1.

Russell was First Lord of the Treasury; Lord Cottenham became Lord-Chancellor; Sir George Grey, Home, and Lord Palmerston, Foreign, Secretary; with whom Earl Grey was now persuaded to act as Secretary for the Colonies. Sir C. Wood was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Auckland First Lord of the Admiralty. The Cabinet consisted of the unusually large number of sixteen, and certainly presented a brilliant display of oratorical and parliamentary talent, though the great preponderance of noblemen gave little promise of a due infusion of business habits, and the paucity of practical men afforded too good reason to fear a serious deficiency in knowledge of the real situation and wants of the country. So completely, however, was the Tory party understood to be split asunder by the dissensions consequent on Free Trade, that the eyes of the entire nation were turned to the new Cabinet, as the only one possible under existing circumstances; and the elections consequent on the vacating of seats from the formation of the new Government excited very little attention. All the members of the new Government were returned almost without opposition.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1846, 102; Parl. Deb. lxxxvii. 1, 4.

5. Government plan for the sugar-duties. July 20.

Parliament met again after a short adjournment, during which the returns for the vacated seats took place on the 16th July; and the first subject of importance which came on for discussion was the sugar-duties, which required immediate attention, as the bill for the existing duties expired on the 4th August. Lord John Russell brought forward this important subject in a very able speech; and the plan which he proposed, and which received the sanction of a large majority of the House of Commons, is the more worthy of attention, as it afforded the first instance of the effect of the free-trade measure, then so much in vogue, and so largely adopted by Parliament, upon the *producing* interests of the empire. "The first question," said his lordship, "is, what is the consumption in average years of the empire? and the next, is there any chance of supply within ourselves adequate

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

to meet it? The returns of sugar imported on an average of the last three years, and the concurring opinion of all practical men engaged in the trade, fix the annual consumption at 252,000 tons; while the most probable view of the supply does not give above 230,000 tons.* Then, where is the additional supply of 22,000 tons, of an article now become one of the necessaries of life to a large part of our people, to come from? There is no resource we can look to but foreign slave-grown sugar. That sugar has been virtually excluded from the market since the final emancipation of the slaves in 1837, a period now of nine years, and all the efforts of the producers of sugar in our own colonies have been unable to keep pace with the demand, or prevent the price of the article rising, as it is now doing, to what, as to it, amounts to a famine level. There is an absolute necessity, therefore, of recurring to the Slave States for a supply of this necessary article of consumption. Indeed, the exclusion of slave-grown sugar, under the present prohibitory system, is impracticable, for the Slave States are in possession of treaties under which they are entitled to demand the admission of their slave-grown sugar 'on the same terms as' the most favoured nation. Under the present system the discouragement to slavery in the Slave States is more apparent than real, because the slave growers find a market for their produce in other countries into which it obtains free admission, whence they receive supplies in return which come

* Calculation of the West India Body for 1847.

	Tons.
West Indies,	125,000
Mauritius,	50,000
East Indies,	75,000
	250,000
That of the sugar refiners was less favourable,—	
West Indies,	115,000
Mauritius,	40,000
East Indies,	70,000
	225,000

—*Ann. Reg.* 1846, p. 168.

from Great Britain, so that there is a virtual exchange of English manufactures for foreign slave sugar. The Spanish slave planters might just as well send their sugar direct to this country in exchange for our manufactures, as do so by means of this intervening transaction.

6. Continued.

"The argument, so strongly rested on by the Protectionists—that if you admit foreign slave sugar on anything like an equality with British free grown, you give an encouragement to slavery, and go back upon all your own enactments for the emancipation of the negroes—though specious in appearance, has no solid foundation. No such bar as is contended for in the case of sugar is imposed upon slave produce in other articles, as cotton, tobacco, copper, and many others. Nobody can deny that the vast consumption of these articles, especially the two first, in this country, gives an impulse to slavery in the United States; but has any one yet been bold enough to affirm, that before admitting the American cotton into our harbours, we must insist on their solving the tremendous problem hanging over their heads in the United States, and emancipating all the negroes by whose hands the cotton has been raised? Such a proposal would be little short of insanity; and yet if there is any foundation for the argument that we should keep up the heavy import-duties on foreign slave-grown sugar to discourage slavery, we unquestionably, to be consistent, should apply the same principle to American slave-grown cotton.

7. Continued.

"Financial considerations of the very highest moment concur with the obvious expedience of the thing itself in recommending the introduction of foreign slave sugars at moderate import-duties. If we deduct the £700,000 of China money, which is not a permanent source of income, from the estimated revenue for 1847-48, there will be a deficiency of £352,000, with the chance of its being increased to half a million in that year. This follows from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer's own statement. Now this being in the most favourable view the state of

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

our finances, is it not expedient to adopt a measure which will fill up the gap, not only without adding to the burdens of the people, but actually diminishing, in a sensible degree, to them the cost of a general and necessary article of human subsistence?

8. Concluded.

"The plan which Government proposes is this: Instead of the present prohibitory duty of 63s. the cwt. on foreign slave muscovado sugar, and 23s. 4d. on foreign free-labour sugar, there shall be imposed for the present year a duty of 21s. on all foreign sugar, whether the produce of free or slave labour, the duty to fall progressively till July 1851, when it should be permanently fixed at 14s.* In addition to this, the differential duty between rum and British spirits is to be reduced from 1s. 6d. to 1s. the gallon. We cannot accede to the demand of the West Indians that molasses should be admitted to our breweries and distilleries. In consideration of these reductions, which will go far to lower the price of sugar to the British consumer, we propose to relax in some degree the restrictions at present in force on the importation of free black immigrants from Africa into the West Indies. By the Orders in Council, originally in force after the suppression of slavery, the emigration of negroes from Sierra Leone to the West Indies was absolutely prohibited, from an apprehension that, if allowed, it would prove the slave trade in disguise. This prohibition was subsequently relaxed, both by Lord Melbourne's government and that of Sir R. Peel, both in regard to Africa and other parts of the world, from a sense of its necessity. Still, however, the law is, that any agreement or contract for the services

* Proposed Rate of Decline of the Duty on Foreign Sugar.

To July 5, 1847,	21s.
„ 1848,	20s.
„ 1849,	18s. 6d.
„ 1850,	17s.
„ 1851,	15s. 6d.
After July 1851,	14s.

—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxvii. 1316, 1317.

of any negro, made in the British settlements in Africa, is not valid or binding in the West Indies, and is not to be respected by the British cruisers. We propose by the present act so far to modify this as to allow contracts for hiring of negroes in the *British* possessions on the coast of Africa to be binding in the West Indies, provided they are not for *more than a year;* but we do not deem it safe to permit any similar concession as to contracts made elsewhere on the African shores, or especially on the Kroo coast. Under this plan we shall realise from the sugar duties a revenue of £4,200,000, being £625,000 more than was expected by Sir R. Peel's proposed scale of duties, and in addition obtain the great advantage of giving the people of this country an increased supply of sugar at a reduced price." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvi. 1304, 1318; Ann. Reg. 1846, 166, 169, 170.

9. Argument of the Protectionists on the other side.

On the other hand it was argued by Lord George Bentinck, Mr Disraeli, and Lord Brougham: "It cannot now be denied, that, contrary to what was strenuously maintained when the emancipation of the negroes took place, the effect of that measure has been seriously to lessen the production of sugar in the West Indies. For while the average production of sugar in the British colonies in the West Indies was, on an average of six years before that event, 195,000 tons, their production since emancipation has fallen off to such a degree, that at one period it did not exceed 107,000 tons, and has in no instance exceeded 145,000 tons. As a natural consequence of this great decline, prices of that article have risen; on an average of twelve years, since emancipation, the rise has been no less than 10s. a hundredweight, or a penny a pound—from 27s. a cwt. to 37s. There can be no doubt that, in this state of affairs, the admission of slave-grown sugar would, in the first instance, reduce its price; possibly bring it down again to 27s. a cwt. But at what price would this advantage be gained, even in the light only of our own pecuniary interests? It could only be effected by

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

lessening still further the production of sugar in our own dominions, and rendering us daily more and more dependent on the foreign slave growers for the supply of what has now become a necessary article of the national subsistence. Is that a desirable state of things? is it creditable to a great nation? And supposing the policy to be carried out to its uttermost length, and our own free-labour sugar to be entirely driven out of the market by the foreign slave-grown, what will be the result so far as prices and our own interests are concerned? Why, that we shall be entirely at the mercy of the foreign slave growers, and that the planters of Cuba and Brazil, having got the monopoly of the article into their own hands, will raise the price to any height which they please.

10. Continued.

"Much is said of the inability of the colonies of Great Britain, working with free labour only, to supply the demand of this country, without a large assistance from foreign slave states. The statement is much exaggerated, and the difficulty, such as it is, has been mainly of our own creation. It is the restrictions imposed on the importation of free labourers into the West Indies, whether from Africa or China, by our own Orders in Council, which have been the main cause of the great decline of West Indian produce since the emancipation. Remove those most absurd and impolitic restrictions, and the production in the West Indies will increase. It is said by the Government that 125,000 tons may this year be expected from the West Indies, and an equal amount may be expected with confidence from the East Indies and the Mauritius. In fact, no limit can be assigned to the capabilities of production of sugar in the East Indies, with a fine climate, ample means of irrigation, and an hundred millions of people to cultivate it. Already in the Mauritius the crop this year has been 60,000 tons, of which 49,000 has been already shipped, or is in the course of being so. And the noble lord opposite calculates on 100,000 tons from India. These sources of

supply will, together, reach 285,000 tons,—considerably more than the annual requirements of this country, which, even during the last two years of unexampled prosperity and impulse to labour, has never exceeded 246,000 tons. Where, then, is the necessity of making a sacrifice of the present and future interests of our own free colonies, when we possess, within ourselves, the means of amply supplying all our necessities?

11. Continued.

"Look to our export trade to our colonies, as compared with that which we carry on with those countries from which we may expect to obtain sugar, and see whether we ourselves are likely to be gainers by exchanging the one with the other. The declared value of our exports to the West Indies was £2,500,000, when the population was 1,000,000, being 57s. a-head of our manufactures, whereas, to the United States, with a population of 15,000,000, it was only £7,500,000, being 10s. a-head. Is is not, then, for our interest to preserve our West Indian customers, who, if they send us their sugar, take our manufactures in return, rather than seek to ingratiate foreign nations, who require so much less of our manufactures, and add so little to our exports? If we get our sugar from Cuba or Brazil, the principal articles which they will take in exchange will be, not manufactures, but gold coin or bullion, the export of which will be attended with no other effect but a drain upon the metallic treasures of the Bank of England, and consequent contraction of the currency, and diminution of credit in this country. And as to the East Indies, the principal difficulty in regard to those possessions is, that their markets are already glutted with our manufactures; and if we in addition adopt measures which will deprive them of a market for the 100,000 tons of sugar which they now raise, what other result is to be anticipated but that their means of purchasing our manufactures will be still further lessened, and our trade with them will run more and more into a large balance of imports over exports, attended

CHAP. XLIII.

1846.

with a ruinous drain upon the metallic resources of this country ?

12. Continued.

"If slave sugar is admitted, and the price of that article is in consequence diminished 6s. per cwt., somebody must be a loser if the consumers in this country are gainers. This difference of price will go into the pockets of the Cuba or Brazilian slave planter, or it will be taken from those of the British West India colonists and those engaged in the commerce of their productions. Was such a loss as this ever voluntarily inflicted by a legislature on one portion of its subjects ? It is boasted on the other side, that if this bill passes, it will save the British consumers from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000 a-year. Be it so. That sum is violently wrested from the West India planters, already labouring under the accumulated difficulties arising from the emancipation of the negroes, and who had adventured the last wreck of their fortunes in the attempt to stay the ruin, on the assurance that the Legislature would never so far recede in its career as to restore slavery and the slave trade, after having made such efforts for its suppression. If this bill passes, many of the most respectable merchants in that once wealthy trade will, before many weeks are over, be in the Gazette, and these splendid islands, once the pride and glory of England, will become a wilderness, inhabited only by savage and wild beasts.

13. Continued.

"Is the country prepared to violate all its resolutions, abandon all its endeavours, contradict all its professions, render itself contemptible in the eyes of men, guilty in the sight of Heaven, by restoring the slave trade after having made such efforts for its abolition ? Mr O'Connell has put the matter plainly and forcibly. 'The question is cheap sugar with slavery, or dearer sugar without it. It is nothing else than the repetition of the children's fable—the large loaf or the father's curse. It is a farce to let in the sugars of Cuba and Brazil, and at the same time to propose or continue emancipation.' No

one regrets the twenty millions paid as the price of emancipation; no one grudges the forty-nine vessels of war, 7000 men and 700 guns, now employed in repressing that infernal traffic. But what excuse can we make for ourselves, what a figure will we make in the eyes of the world, if at the very time when we are paying £1,500,000 as the interest of the loan borrowed, and the expense of these armaments, we are making a present of a similar or larger sum to the slave growers of Cuba and Brazil, and that too at the expense of our own fellow-countrymen in the West Indies, who have struggled on in opposition to overwhelming difficulties, in reliance on our philanthropic professions? The profits which the slave-owners will make of this measure are immense. If the price of sugar is raised by it to them £6 a ton, and each negro make three tons a-year, the annual value of the slave labour is increased £18. Supposing he lasts ten years, there is £180 added to the value of the slave, which at present is £81! What a fearful encouragement are we about to give to the accursed traffic which we professed ourselves so desirous to abolish!

"It has often been said, but it cannot be too often repeated, that the slave trade which the bill now under consideration goes to strengthen and restore, is a species of that infernal traffic far worse, as well as more extensive, than that of which Mr Wilberforce effected the abolition forty years ago. Imagination cannot conceive, the pen almost refuses to record, the lips can scarcely be brought to utter, the horrors of this awful traffic as it is now proposed to be re-established. Six years ago Mr Fowell Buxton said in this house, that such had been the impulse given to the slave trade by the emancipation of the negroes that 250,000 negroes annually passed the Atlantic; and Lord Aberdeen said, in 1844, that the average number of slaves annually imported into the Southern States of North America and the Spanish West Indies alone, was 100,000 a-year. This year above 16,000 were imported into Rio

14. Continued.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

Janeiro alone. Is it to a trade of such gigantic dimensions, so much exceeding what our own slave trade was in its worst days, that you are prepared to give the immense additional impulse arising from the present measure, which will at once more than double the value of every imported slave? But melancholy as the vast increase of the slave trade, from the effect of our measures, has been, it is as nothing compared to the augmented horrors of the traffic, which, in the hands of the Spaniards and Portuguese, have now reached a pitch never before equalled, and which apparently it is impossible to exceed. By the Passenger Act in Great Britain, which regulated the slave trade while it was legal, five tons were allowed for each slave; but as it is now practised, *there are five or six slaves to one ton.* The slave-deck is 2 feet 10 inches high; and, in one instance, 349 human beings were embarked on board a vessel 67 feet long by 21 broad, with a measure of from 80 to 100 tons. Such are the sufferings of the poor wretches crammed into these holes, where they are for days and weeks enduring the agonies of suffocation, that they are sometimes driven by the madness induced by suffering into revolt; but in such cases the arms and discipline of the Europeans generally prevail, and after forty or fifty have been massacred, the rest are flogged in so merciless a manner that death would be a relief to their prolonged sufferings.*

"Let us not deceive ourselves, therefore: we are about to pass a measure which will restore the slave trade in

* "Those who were thus executed were heavily ironed; a rope was then put round their necks, which was rove through the yard-arm, and they were run up from the deck. By this means they were not hanged, they were strangled or choked, and in that state, while still alive, they were shot in the breast, and then thrown overboard. If there were two shot or hanged together, they were run up in the same manner, until their legs were laid across the rail of the bulwark on the ship's side, and then they were broken, and chopped off to save the irons. In this way the bleeding body of a negro was thrown overboard to make way for another. The legs of about a dozen were chopped off in that manner. When the bleeding feet fell on the deck, they were picked up by the Brazilian crew, and then thrown overboard after the body; sometimes they pelted the body with them in sport while it hung half alive. When

15. Concluded.

far more than its pristine horrors. When on the verge of sealing it up by our powerful navy on the coast of Africa, we shall reopen it in a new legitimised channel, and in a form which will set at nought all the vigilance of our cruisers. Already France is cordially co-operating with us for the extinction of this infernal traffic, and even in Cuba and Brazil themselves a better feeling has arisen. Yet at this very moment, with the goal almost in view, we abandon the race, relinquish the good fight, and restore the trade in augmented strength and aggravated horrors. This bill will render nugatory all our former exertions for the abolition of the slave trade. The 150,000 negroes now annually imported from Africa will be fearfully augmented by the bounty we are preparing to give for their introduction. Free labour in our own colonies can never compete with slave labour, unless the slave-market of Africa is closed; and by the profits with which this measure will cause the slave trade to be attended, it will be reopened with more effect than ever. Eighty thousand human beings, the half of those imported, will be hurried by it, amidst excruciating tortures, into eternity! And this, in the year 1846, is the first act of a Liberal Government, and the earnest of the measures they are prepared to adopt in the service of humanity!" [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxviii. 34,54; Ann. Reg. 1846, 173, 191.

16. Sir R. Peel's singular conduct, and passing of the bill.

Sir R. Peel pursued a very singular but eminently characteristic course on this occasion. He stated that the bill before the house was widely different from what he intended to have introduced, and that he thought the West Indies was an exceptional case to the general

two, chained together, were to be hung, they were shot while they remained suspended, and then thrown overboard while still alive. The women were shot in the neck, and thrown over while still living. Several of them were seen to struggle in the water for some time before they sunk. After this slaughter was done, about twenty were brought up and flogged. The women were flogged as well as the men. Such was the severity of the flogging they received that they were obliged to lie on their bellies during the remainder of the voyage; and on the backs of some the flesh had putrified and fallen off in pieces of six or eight inches in diameter."—*Account of the Treatment of the Slaves on board Lenordi Fonseca's Ship*, quoted by Lord G. Bentinck in *Parl. Deb.* lxxxviii. 49, 50.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

principles of free trade. Situated as he was, however, he declared his intention to support the bill, not because he approved of it, for he agreed with all Lord George Bentinck had said on the abomination of the traffic in slaves, and thought the reduction of duties on foreign slave sugar should be much more gradual, but simply because, if the bill were thrown out, which might "easily be done," "the Ministry would resign, and the country would have three Ministries within three weeks, and the new Ministry would revoke the measure regarding the Corn Laws which had been just passed." Then he declared that the abandonment of Protection in the British Islands compelled him to surrender it in the West Indies also. The result was, that Sir R. Peel, and all the Liberal Conservatives, as they began to be called, voted with the Ministry, and the bill was carried by a majority of 130, the numbers being 265 to 135. This was probably a tolerably accurate index of the strength of the purely Protectionist party, as compared with the united Whigs, and Liberal or urban Conservatives. In the House of Lords the majority was only 18, but that was in a very thin House of 28 members only. Every one saw that the battle of native industry had been fought and lost, and that, for good or for evil, free trade, in every department, was to be the destiny of the State.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxviii. 179, 182; Ann. Reg. 1846, 185, 192.

17. Result of this measure to the West Indies.

Thus was protection finally taken from the West Indies, and the principle of free trade carried out, even in that quarter, where its advocates admitted its application was most open to exception. Thus, also, it may now be confidently stated, were the WEST INDIES FINALLY RUINED. This is now proved by the decisive evidence of facts. For some years after the bill was passed, and before the rapidly declining rate of import duty on foreign slave sugar, the planters made immense efforts, hoping, as is often the case, to be able to compensate the reduction of price by increase of production; and though the returns exhibited a falling off in the principal articles of production, it was not so considerable as

might have been expected;* yet they exhibited in the next three years a falling off in sugar to the extent of 360,000 cwt.; in rum, of 900,000 gallons; and in coffee, of 3,200,000 pounds! On the other hand, the foreign sugar imported since the bill came into operation has been immense; from Cuba it has more than tripled; from Brazil more than doubled.† But at length the resources of the colonies were worn out—the unequal struggle terminated. After having exhausted their credit and mortgaged their estates to the utmost they would bear, they could continue the conflict no longer. Vast estates in all the islands were abandoned, and speedily covered by jungle, in the midst of which the negroes squatted, and clearing little bits of ground adequate for their own maintenance, resumed the indolent, listless life of their fathers in Africa; while the foreign sugar imported has increased so astonishingly, since the lowest point of the duties was reached in 1851, that IN THE THREE SUBSEQUENT YEARS IT HAD TRIPLED. An hundred millions of British property had been destroyed from the effect of these disastrous changes; a great and growing market for our

* IMPORTED FROM WEST INDIES.

Years.	Sugar, cwt.	Molasses, cwt.	Rum, gallons.	Coffee, lb.	Cocoa, lb.	Pimento, lb.
1847	3,199,814	531,171	5,259,449	6,763,163	3,026,381	1,358,560
1848	2,794,987	385,484	5,653,840	5,075,128	2,602,309	2,326,576
1849	2,840,531	605,628	4,329,640	3,590,839	3,159,086	2,273,956

—PORTER, p. 803.

† SUGAR IMPORTED FROM CUBA, PORTO RICO, AND BRAZIL INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Years.	Cuba and Porto Rico. Cwt.	Years.	Brazil. Cwt.
1845, . .	348,529	1845, . .	325,359
1846, . .	609,670	1846, . .	302,067
1847, . .	1,157,299	1847, . .	701,693

Sugar exported from Cuba and Brazil.

Years.	Cuba. Tons.	Years.	Brazil. Tons.
1840, . .	145,000	1846, . .	66,276
1850, . .	270,000	1849, . .	99,629

—*Returns*, May 3, 1852.

CHAP. XLIII.

1846.

manufactures, and nursery for our shipping, reduced to little more than half of its former amount.*

18. Effect on the slave trade.

Disastrous as these effects have been to the interests of Great Britain in the West Indies, they have been light in comparison of the immense impulse thereby given to the foreign slave-trade. Mr Fowell Buxton computed the number of Africans annually consumed by the foreign slave-trade in 1841 at 250,000; and Lord Aberdeen admitted that the slaves imported into Cuba and the Southern States of North America in that year were 100,000! What, then, must have been the magnitude of this infernal traffic, when, in consequence of

* British and Foreign Sugar imported into Great Britain in first Nine Months of 1852, 1853, and 1854.

Years.	British. Cwt.	Years.	Foreign. Cwt.
1852, . .	2,944,186	1852, . .	877,404
1853, . .	2,413,943	1853, . .	1,547,406
1854, . .	2,584,735	1854, . .	2,560,554

—*Parl. Returns*, 1856.

The exports of British produce and manufactures to the West Indies, since the lowering of the duties, have undergone a great diminution—viz.

Years.		Years.	
1846, . .	£3,253,420	1851, . .	£2,433,665
1847, . .	2,102,577	1852, . .	2,031,358
1848, . .	1,434,477	1853, . .	1,906,639
1849, . .	1,821,146	1854, . .	2,008,380
1850, . .	1,924,376	1855, . .	1,979,956

—Porter, 366,367.

The increase of our exports to Cuba has been as follows,—

Years.		Years.	
1846, . .	£844,112	1851, . .	£1,850,210
1847, . .	896,554	1852, . .	1,629,752
1848, . .	733,169	1853, . .	1,124,860
1849, . .	1,036,153	1854, . .	1,638,159
1850, . .	1,241,673	1855, . .	1,059,606

—Porter, 366, 367.

The imports of Great Britain from Cuba and Brazil alone have now come almost to equal those from the whole West Indian Islands put together,—

Years.	Cuba.	Brazil.	Total. Foreign.	West Indies.
1854	£3,369,444	£2,083,603	£5,453,047	£6,180,816
1855	2,332,753	2,273,819	4,606,572	5,962,993

—*Parl. Returns for these Years.*

our lowering the duties on foreign slave sugar five years afterwards, the production of sugar by means of slaves was more than doubled! The mind is staggered, as by the Affghanistan disaster or the Moscow retreat, by the contemplation of so frightful an accumulation of human suffering, and by the consideration that this is not a mere passing calamity, how terrible soever, but an *uniform and chronic state of human agony*, induced by our own acts, and of regular and permanent recurrence! And all this was done by the British legislature, with the facts fully before them, with the whole consequences distinctly before their eyes, and without a single expression of dissatisfaction from the numerous urban constituents of the majority! The humanitarians were silent; the mighty religious party which had convulsed the country in 1834, when emancipation was forced through, did not give a symptom of life; consistency, abashed and ashamed, slunk away. Humanity, patriotic spirit, religious zeal, all were stilled by the awful consideration of a rise of a penny in the pound on the price of sugar!

19. Explanation of this given by foreign writers.

Struck with astonishment at so extraordinary an instance of indifference to human suffering, and inconsistency on the part of a people professing such strong religious and humane sentiments, the whole foreign writers have recourse to what affords, it must be confessed, at first sight, a very satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon. One and all of them say that the English people were not in the slightest degree inconsistent, but, on the contrary, were perfectly consistent throughout. In the first instance, they lent a willing ear to the assertions of the professed humanitarians, who assured them that free labour was much more economical and productive than forced; and emancipated their slaves in the belief that by so doing they would be able to undersell all the world in the production of sugar, and thus secure every market for their own colonies. Finding that they were

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

mistaken, and that free labour could not compete with slave in the production of that tropical production—and that, its price was rising on their hands, in consequence of their own acts,—they immediately turned round, and with equal zeal sought to lower it by the cheap admission of foreign slave sugar, regardless alike of the ruin of their own sugar colonies and the augmentation of the foreign slave-trade. The English people, it is said, were not inconsistent; on the contrary, they were entirely consistent throughout. On both occasions, they were actuated only by interested motives, and sacrificed everything at the altar of selfishness.

20. Real explanation of it.

Plausible as this explanation of the phenomenon undoubtedly is, and widely as it has obtained credit among foreign nations, there is no man can have lived through both periods in Great Britain without being conscious that it is fallacious. The British people have many faults, but hypocrisy and dissimulation are not among the number. Their faults are those of large bodies of men or of governments ruled by their influences. The character assigned by the poet to the fairest part of creation is much more descriptive of them; not less than beauty itself, "varium et mutabile" is their true designation. Their determination in 1846 was directly the reverse of what it had been in 1833; but nevertheless on both occasions they were perfectly sincere. On the first, they had been worked up to a perfect frenzy by the long-continued efforts of a numerous and respectable religious party in favour of negro emancipation, and they were resolved to have it without the smallest regard either to the lessons of experience or the councils of wisdom; on the last, they had been worked up to a similar frenzy in favour of free trade by the declamations of the cheapening party, and the long-continued distress produced by the contraction of the currency, and they were resolved to have it, come what might of emancipation and the entire negro race. The conclusion to be drawn from this is, not that the British people are hypocritical, and that their zeal for emancipa-

tion was a mere cloak to selfish designs, but that, like all numerous bodies of men, they are subject to sudden gusts of passion, which for a time obliterate their reason and deprive them of all power of rational direction, and that the necessary effect of popularising our institutions has been to imprint a character of vacillation and instability on our national conduct.

21. Proof of the colonies having been disfranchised by the Reform Bill.

But this flagrant and most disastrous instance of vacillation suggests another most important consideration, with which the maintenance of our colonial empire in future times is entirely wound up. This is the proof it affords how completely the Reform Bill had *disfranchised the colonies*, as well as the producing classes generally through the empire. That the lowering the duties on foreign slave-grown sugar would destroy the West Indian colonies was self-evident, and hardly denied by the supporters of the measure. What they said was, that this consideration, how serious soever, must yield to the imperious necessity of procuring an adequate supply of what had now become a staple of food for a large part of our people. The House of Commons accordingly passed a bill, which they well knew would destroy the West India colonies, by a majority of 130. Could this have happened under the old constitution, when the West India interest, let into the house by the close boroughs, was the strongest separate one in Parliament, and could muster eighty votes? This as well as the preceding decision on the Corn Laws illustrates the lasting and all-important effect of the Reform Bill in *disfranchising the producing interests, whether at home or in the colonies*, and vesting the government of the country in the *boroughs actuated by an adverse interest*. To produce cheap and sell dear was the interest of the former; to buy cheap and sell dear, the interest of the latter. Unobserved amidst the strife of parties, unnoticed by the aspirants for power, this was by far the most important effect of the Reform Bill; and unless remedied by subsequent legislation, by a larger admission of pro-

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

ducing interests in the centre, and the admission of *direct colonial representation* from the extremities, will, beyond all doubt, in the end, dissolve the British empire.*

22. Discussion on flogging in the army.

Another important subject powerfully arrested the attention of the British people and legislature at this period, and that was the matter of flogging in the army. The immediate cause of the excitement on the subject was the melancholy end of a private soldier named White, who died a few days after having received a very severe flogging at Hounslow, though whether from the effects of the punishment, or from it combined with an organic disease in the sufferer, was rendered doubtful by the medical evidence on the subject. The case came before Mr Wakley as coroner of Middlesex, and was very ably

* In the debate on the sugar bill, Mr Disraeli observed: "I do not oppose the resolutions of Ministers merely because they are antagonistic to our previous arrangements for the suppression of slavery and the slave trade; I oppose them because they are *antagonistic to the fragment left of the old colonial system of England.* I venture to predict that the house will soon retrace its steps, and reconstruct that now almost annihilated system. I say so because the history of England is a history of reaction. I believe the prosperity of England may be attributed to this cause, not that it has committed less blunders than other countries, but the people are a people more sensible of their errors. What have you not done, and what steps have you not retraced? You destroyed your church establishment, and you replaced it; you destroyed your ancient monarchy, and you re-established it; you destroyed the House of Lords, and now you are obliged to take up your bills to them for their sanction. You even abolished this very House of Commons, and yet we are here in it debating a great question. What are you doing now but retracing your steps on a vital question, and confessing to the people of England, that after having laboured for forty years and spent £50,000,000 to destroy the slave trade, you find it now necessary to re-establish it?"—*Parl. Deb.*, lxxxviii. pp. 164, 165. Mr Disraeli was right as to reaction in matters of *opinion or passion;* they are often the subject of most extraordinary changes among men. But it is by no means equally clear that reactions will take place against *vested interests;* or whether a particular class of men, once become possessed of power, will ever voluntarily share it with others, or use it for any other purpose than the forwarding of its own immediate interests. Certain it is, that whatever may be the case in future, there has hitherto been no reaction whatever in the British constituencies in favour of this obvious colonial injustice, but rather the reverse. A very able man and sagacious observer, Mr Justice Halyburton, observed with truth in a public speech delivered at Glasgow on 25th March 1857, in the midst of the turmoil of the elections going on in every part of the empire at that period, that amidst all the opinions delivered by candidates, and the questions put to them by constituents, there *had not been one which had reference to the colonies of Great Britain,* though they have become so considerable as to have taken off in 1854 no less than £34,000,000 out of the entire £97,000,000 exports of the empire.

conducted by that gentleman through an investigation which extended over several days. The harrowing details brought out in the evidence strongly affected the public mind, to which the continuance of this degrading torture in a noble service had long been matter of abhorrence; and as the case went on, the excitement became so strong that the subject was brought forward in more than one motion in the House of Commons, and terminated ere long in a humane and judicious regulation of the Duke of Wellington's, which has removed the most flagrant evils connected with this mode of punishment.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1846, 203.

23. Motion on the subject, and Wellington's order.

Captain Layard brought this painful matter before the house by a motion for an address to her Majesty, praying for an inquiry how far the introduction of limited service would improve the efficiency of the army. From the returns to which he referred, it appeared that, in the last ten years, the number of recruits had been, on an average, 12,000 a-year, and that of desertions 5300; that fully two-thirds of these deserters had been recovered and rejoined the service, and a third were unaccounted for; and that, during five years preceding 1845, £17,000 had been paid for the apprehension of deserters, and £54,500 for the maintenance of men in confinement. Another return showed that, from 1st January 1839 to 31st December 1843, a period of five years, 3355 had undergone corporal punishment, and 28,190 sentences of imprisonment had been pronounced.* From these facts, which were certainly suf-

* Cost of Apprehension of Deserters, and of Soldiers in Confinement, from 1840 to 1845.

Years.	Cost of Apprehension of Deserters.	Cost of Soldiers in Confinement.	Rank and File in each year, exclusive of India.
1840-1	£2,634	£10,364	82,013
1841-2	4,385	10,779	80,971
1842-3	3,959	10,189	84,140
1843-4	2,874	10,213	88,737
1844-5	2,168	11,975	88,261
	£17,020	£54,500	

—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxviii. 290.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

ficiently surprising, he argued that there must be something wrong in the constitution of the army, or the class of men from which it was recruited, and that recruiting for a limited period would materially improve the character and condition of the soldier. His proposal was, to enlist for ten years only, and that, after twenty-one years' service, the soldier should be entitled to the old pension of tenpence a-day, and one shilling if disabled, instead of the present reduced pension of sixpence a-day after twenty-five years' service. The Secretary at War, Mr Fox Maule, resisted the motion, and explained that the great majority of the desertions were in Canada, where the facility of escaping into the States, and the demand for labour there, presented so many temptations to the soldier to leave his colours. He referred also to the many improvements recently introduced into the service, especially for the education and amusement of the men. Captain Layard did not press his motion to a division, it being understood that the Commander-in-Chief had a regulation on the subject in preparation. On the 7th August, Lord John Russell announced the change he had made, which consisted in a general order, that, by no court-martial, general, special, or regimental, should a sentence be pronounced ordering more than fifty lashes to be inflicted. This was accompanied by minute directions that every precaution should be taken to ascertain the health of the person who was to suffer the punishment, and any circumstance, as heat or cold, taken into consideration, which might either aggravate his sufferings, or augment the danger of the punishment. Notwithstanding this great modification, Dr Bowring brought forward a motion, a few days after, for the total abolition of corporal punishment in the army, but it was negatived by a majority of 97 to 37; and the Duke of Wellington's regulation has ever since continued to be the law to regulate the practice of the army.[1]*

Aug. 7.

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxviii. 290, 694; Ann. Reg. 1846, 203, 206.

* The Duke said, in his brief characteristic way, upon learning of the unfortunate occurrence at Hounslow: "This shall not occur again: though I be-

Reflections on this subject.

The question of the length of time for which soldiers should be enlisted is one of comparatively easy solution, and has, since Captain Layard's motion, been put on a most satisfactory footing. Enlistment is always made for ten years only; with the provision, that if the man, after getting his discharge at the end of that period, shall re-enlist, and serve for eleven years more, he shall then be entitled to his discharge, with a pension for life, which, if unfit for further service, is a shilling a-day. This system meets every requirement on the subject; for, on the one hand, the enlistment for ten years only avoids the appearance of perpetual servitude, while, on the other, so easy is the life of a soldier, compared to that of ordinary workmen, that nine-tenths of those who get their discharge at the end of ten years find daily toil insupportable, re-enlist at the end of a few months, and voluntarily serve out the remaining eleven years, so as to become entitled to their retired allowance. But the question of corporal punishment is surrounded with much greater difficulties; for the Duke of Wellington's regulation has introduced a limitation greater in appearance than reality. The severity and danger of flogging arises much more from the weight of the instrument used than the number of lashes; it is well known that twenty-four strokes with the cat-o'-nine-tails in the navy, where it is much heavier, is a severer punishment than two hundred and fifty with the ordinary one used in the army. There is seldom more than twelve strokes inflicted by the knout in Russia, and yet the infliction often occasions death; and it is in the power of the executioner, by four or five blows inflicted in a particular way, to destroy the victim. Notwithstanding this, the Duke's restriction has proved most salutary, and has nearly terminated the complaints formerly so frequent on the subject. There have been no deaths, at least that are known of, from the effects of flogging since it was

lieve that corporal punishment cannot be dispensed with, yet I will not sanction that degree of it that shall lead to loss of life or limb."—Per Mr Fox Maule, *Ann. Reg.* 1846, p. 209.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

issued; in many regiments, at least on home service, corporal punishment has been unknown for a number of years; in none is it ever now inflicted except for insubordination or disgraceful offences, such as theft; and in all, the number of the inflictions, in peace at least, has been most materially diminished.

25. Difference in the composition of the British and foreign armies.

In considering this subject, which doubtless, at some future period, will again come to occupy the attention of the legislature, there are two considerations which must be constantly kept in view, if a correct conclusion is to be arrived at on the subject. The first of these is the entirely different *class of men* from whom our army is drawn, and that of which all those of the Continental States are composed. In France, the German States, and Russia, the army is raised by conscription, which embraces, without exception, the whole population, but compels the soldiers only to a few years' service. In Russia, the period is twenty years, after which the soldier becomes a freeman, and is entitled to his discharge; but in France, Austria, and Prussia, the military force is kept up by forced service, exacted from the whole male inhabitants in early life for three years, reserving to those who acquire, in that time, a taste for a military life, to embrace it as a permanent profession. In Great Britain, on the other hand, conscription for the regular army has been unknown for half a century; and even for the militia, though authorised by law, during the late war, it was never put into execution. Thus the whole force requires to be enrolled by voluntary enlistment, and this, unless in periods of uncommon excitement, confines the recruits to the lowest ranks of society, chiefly drawn from the inhabitants of great towns, and often inveigled into the service in a moment of intoxication, or induced to enter it to escape from creditors, or the claims of bastard children. This difference in the composition of the force necessarily occasions a vast difference in the means by which its discipline is to be enforced. If the whole nobility and gentry of

England were obliged to serve in the army, with a musket on their shoulders, alongside of their tenants' and labourers' sons, for three years, discipline might be preserved in a very different way from what has been found necessary when the privates are exclusively drawn from the most reckless, and often previously irregular, classes of the community.

26. Necessity of corporal punishment in the field.

The second is, that however frightful may be the torture inflicted by flogging, and however anxiously every friend to mankind may wish to have it entirely abolished, it must always be retained as the *principal method of coercion in the field.* In presence of the enemy no other mode of preserving discipline is practicable. It is impossible, as the French do, to shoot our soldiers for trifling offences; that would seriously weaken our small military force, if no other consideration forbade the infliction of so extreme a penalty. Nearly three thousand cases of flogging occurred in the Crimea: could you have shot all these men? Then, if shooting is out of the question, except for the gravest crimes, what are you to do with offenders who invariably multiply so rapidly with the first license of military operations? Prisons there are none in the tented field: if there were, the sentence of imprisonment in such circumstances is a punishment not to the culprit, but to his comrades, for it excuses him from fatigue and danger, and exposes them in his place to both. Extra drills, and the like excellent substitutes in home barracks, are out of the question when every man is worked in marches or watches to the uttermost of his strength, and often far beyond it. Death itself loses its worst terrors to those who have it daily before their eyes, and see their comrades in the field or the hospital incessantly melting away. In such circumstances punishment is absolutely indispensable, and, to be effective, it must be speedy—such as neither burdens others, nor disables the culprit himself for any length of time, and yet so serious as to excite his apprehensions and those of his comrades.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

When these different requisites are taken into consideration, it will probably be found that flogging, as restricted by the Duke of Wellington, combines them all in a remarkable degree, and that the utmost that can be hoped for is, that it may gradually fall into disuse in pacific quarters, and be reserved only for the rude discipline of the field. Accordingly, when Lord William Bentinck, by a general order in 1834, abolished flogging in the Indian army, the relaxation of discipline which ensued in consequence proved to be so serious, that some years after, during Lord Hardinge's administration, it was found necessary formally to re-establish it.*

27. Lord Palmerston's Cabinet minute on the defences of the country.

A very important minute was presented to the Cabinet during this summer by Lord Palmerston, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, on the subject of the defenceless state of the country. This subject was naturally brought under his notice from the narrow escape which the nation had made within a few years from a rupture with France, in consequence of the dispute about Queen Pomare in Tahiti, and the still more recent coldness which had arisen on the subject of the Spanish marriages, which will be explained in the succeeding chapter. The facts he adduced were most important, and though little interesting to the unthinking many, with whom future dangers can seldom be made an object of consideration, they were of overwhelming force to the thinking few. From this statement it appeared that the whole regular force of the empire, exclusive of India, was only 88,000 men, of whom a half were absorbed in the colonies, leaving only 44,000 for the defence of the British Islands. Of these,

* It was stated by the Duke of Wellington, in a conversation on this subject in the House of Lords: "This experiment of abolishing flogging has been tried and failed in India, the troops having mutinied in the most disgraceful manner, in consequence of which Lord Hardinge has been obliged recently to restore it. The fact is, that it is impossible to carry on the discipline of the British army without some punishment of that description, which the individual shall feel. I will continue to do what I have always endeavoured to do, that is, to diminish the punishment as much as possible; and *I hope to live to see it abolished altogether.*"—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxviii. 599, 600.

24,000 were required for Ireland, leaving only 20,000 for Great Britain, one-half of whom were required for the garrisons of Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham. These 10,000 regular soldiers were all that could be relied on to defend England, and preserve London and Woolwich, the great arsenals of the empire, from destruction! This was at a time when France had 300,000 regulars on foot, besides 2,630,000 national guards, and Russia 573,000 soldiers in arms.* Nor was the obvious danger of this state of things lessened by a consideration of the state of the navy; for at that period the whole ships of the line around Great Britain were only thirteen, of which not more than one-half were fit for sea, and even they only half-manned. On the other hand, the French had sixteen sail of the line in commission, one-half in the Channel, and 55,000 men in the *Levée Permanente*, produced by the maritime conscription, constantly ready to man them; and Russia had twenty-eight

* The Duke of Wellington added his valuable testimony as to the same state of things. His Grace said, in his celebrated letter to Sir John Burgoyne:—

"I have in vain endeavoured to awaken the attention of different Administrations to this state of things, as well known to our neighbours, rivals in power, at least former adversaries and enemies, as ourselves. We ought to have in garrison, at the moment when war is declared, in

	Men.
The Channel Islands, besides the militia of each,	10,000
Plymouth,	10,000
Milford Haven,	5,000
Cork,	10,000
Portsmouth,	10,000
Dover,	10,000
Sheerness, Chatham, and the Thames,	10,000
	65,000

"I suppose that one-half of the whole regular force of the country would be stationed in Ireland, which half would give the garrison of Cork. The remainder must be supplied from the half of the whole force at home stationed in Great Britain. The whole force stationed at home in Great Britain and Ireland would not afford a sufficient number of men for the mere defence and occupation, on the breaking-out of a war, of the works constructed for the defence of the dockyards and naval arsenals, *without leaving a single man disposable.*

"The measure upon which I have earnestly entreated different Administrations to decide, which is constitutional, and has been invariably adopted in time

CHAP. XLIII.

1846.

sail of the line in the Baltic, and thirty frigates constantly equipped and ready for sea. These two powers could at any time, within a fortnight of the time when their respective ambassadors left London, have thirty sail of the line and forty frigates or war-steamers in the Channel, against which Great Britain could only oppose, at the very utmost, half the number, and those manned by crews hastily got together, and altogether untrained to warlike operations. And all this existed at a time when, in consequence of our immensely extended empire, Great Britain was constantly brought into collision with foreign powers, and had, within these few years, been repeatedly on the very verge of a rupture with France, Russia, or America.[1]

[1] Palmerston's Memorial, Aug. 1846, MS.

Probably there was no member of the Cabinet to whom the facts stated in this able and important state-paper failed in carrying conviction; but the position of the Ministry, only a few weeks in power, and with a

of peace, is to raise, embody, and discipline the same number of militia for the three kingdoms as during the late war. This would give an organised force of a hundred and fifty thousand men, which we might immediately set to work to discipline. This amount would enable us to establish the strength of our army; and with an augmentation of the regular army, which would cost £400,000, would put the country on its legs in respect to personal force, and I would engage for its defence, old as I am. But as we stand now, and if it be true that the exertions of the fleet alone are not sufficient to provide for our defences, *we are not safe for a week after a declaration of war.*

"I shall be deemed foolhardy in engaging for the defence of this country with such a force as the militia. I may be so. I confess I should infinitely prefer, and feel more confidence in, an army of regular troops. But I know that I shall not have these. I can have the others; and if an addition is made to the regular army allotted for home defence, of a force which would cost £400,000 a-year, there would be a sufficient disciplined force in the field to enable him who should command it to defend the country.

"Our magazines and arsenals are very inadequately provided. This deficiency has been occasioned by the sale of arms, and of various descriptions of arsenal stores, since the termination of the late war, to diminish the demand of supply, to carry on the peace service of the ordnance; in part, by the fire in the Tower some years ago, and by the difficulty under which all Governments in this country labour in *prevailing upon Parliament in time of peace to take into consideration measures necessary for the safety of the country in time of war.* I am bordering on seventy-seven years of age passed in honour. *I hope that the Almighty may protect me from being again the witness of the tragedy which I cannot prevail on my contemporaries to take measures to avert.*"—WELLINGTON to SIR J. BURGOYNE, April 11, 1846.

House of Commons composed of such heterogeneous materials that it had carried the Ministry through the greatest triumph recorded in recent times, and hurled it from power at the same time by nearly equal majorities, rendered it impossible at the moment to undertake so hazardous a step as any addition to the army estimates. But the Duke of Wellington, who had long and earnestly laboured, though in vain, to impress upon successive Cabinets the perilous state of the country, from the evident inadequacy of its military and naval forces, now devised and carried into execution a plan which was extremely well conceived for making, at a very trifling cost, a very considerable addition to the military resources of the State. This consisted in organising the military pensioners throughout the empire, and the dockyard-men in the naval arsenals, in fencible battalions, which were called out and drilled regularly for a few weeks in the year, and were liable to be called out by lord-lieutenants in counties, or mayors and provosts in boroughs, if the public peace was seriously endangered. Upon the dockyard-men, being for the most part novices in the military art, little reliance could be placed; but the pensioners, being all old soldiers, easily retained their habits of actual service, and constituted a most admirable force, at once regular and disciplined, constantly accessible either to support the civil magistrate in cases of domestic tumult, or to form reserve and garrison battalions in the event of actual warfare. This force amounted to 20,000 in Great Britain, and 10,000 in Ireland; and it proved of the most essential service in a perilous social crisis, as will be narrated in the course of the present chapter.*

28. Wellington's measure for enrolling the pensioners.

How strongly soever the Whig leaders may have declaimed in the House of Commons against Sir R. Peel's coercion-act for Ireland, they soon felt, when they came

* Sir Francis Head, who published a most interesting work at this juncture on the military defences of the State, gives the following vidimus of the military resources of the principal European powers, which is of the more im-

CHAP. XLIII.

1846.

29. Arms bill for Ireland.

into power, the necessity of some such measure to protect life and property in some of the disturbed districts of that country. No sooner, accordingly, were they installed in office, than they themselves brought forward a new coercion-bill, under the name of an "Arms Bill," differing from the one which proved fatal to their predecessors only in being even more rigorous, and in some respects oppressive. The purport of it was to render the possession as well as carrying of all arms illegal in the proclaimed districts, unless the names of the persons were previously given in and registered by the Government authorities. There can be no doubt that this bill, how stringent soever, was loudly called for by the state of the country, especially in the five disturbed counties; and the frightful increase which took place, during the next winter and spring, in offences against property too clearly proved its necessity.[1] So great was the distaste of the Irish members, however, to any such measure, and so entire

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxvii.; Ann. Reg. 1846.

portance as it was framed on official sources of information, and exhibits their state when serious wars were approaching in every quarter: —

I.—FRANCE.

Regulars.

	Men.
Infantry,	301,224
Cavalry,	58,932
Artillery,	30,166
Engineers,	18,298
Regular,	408,620
National Guards,	2,630,800

II.—RUSSIA.

Regulars.

	Men.
Infantry,	468,000
Cavalry,	85,000
Cossacks,	20,000
Regular,	573,000
Guns,	1,020
Garrisons and Reserves,	150,000
Cossack irregulars,	10,000

III.—AUSTRIA (IN WAR).

Regulars.

Infantry,	484,240
Cavalry,	54,560
Artillery,	26,104
Engineers, &c.,	56,549
Regular,	626,543
Reduced in peace to	378,552
Landwehr,	200,000

IV.—PRUSSIA.

Regular and Landwehr.

Infantry,	265,530
Cavalry,	49,662
Artillery,	23,400
Engineers, &c.,	40,800
Regular,	379,392
Guns,	1,163
Landsturm,	222,416

the dependence of Ministers on their parliamentary support, that they were under the necessity, after the bill had been read a second time in the Commons, by a considerable majority, to abandon it altogether, and

V.—GREAT BRITAIN.

IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

	Men.
Regulars.	
Great Britain—Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery,	37,845
Ireland,	24,005
British Islands,	61,840
Colonies,	61,453
Total Regulars,	123,293
Irregulars.	
Pensioners,	30,000
Dockyard-men,	8,000
Yeomanry,	13,441
Channel Island Militia,	4,700
Total Irregulars,	56,141

—HEAD, *Dangers of Society*, 5-36.

IN COLONIES.

European Colonies,	7,951
American Colonies and West Indies,	19,835
Africa,	3,703
	31,453
India,	30,000
	61,453

NAVAL FORCES OF THE DIFFERENT POWERS IN 1850.

I.—ENGLAND.

	Ships.
Ships of the Line and Building,	
of which 65 are serviceable,	93
50 to 70,	39
Frigates,	110
War Steamers,	56

II.—FRANCE.

	Ships.
Line,	46
Frigates,	50
War Steamers,	102

III.—RUSSIA.

Line,	45
Frigates,	30

IV.—AMERICA.

Line,	11
Frigates,	14
War Steamers,	14

—*United Service Gazette*, Dec. 1850. *Almanack of Saxe-Gotha*, 1851,415, 461.

The ships in commission around the British Islands were—Line, 13; Frigates, 9—one-half of which alone were serviceable.

The whole French navy could be speedily rendered serviceable, as their naval conscription amounted to 56,000 men. The British navy was manned by voluntary enrolment.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

leave Ireland, on the eve of the most terrible famine recorded in history, to the passions and the sufferings of its dense and miserable population.

30. Sir R. Peel's measures for the relief of the Irish suffering, and those of Lord J. Russell.

The measures of Sir R. Peel for the relief of this suffering, though trifling in comparison of what was done after his relinquishment of office, had been very judicious. They consisted chiefly in the purchase of Indian meal by Government commissioners, after it had come to this country, but before it got into the hands of forestallers, so as to retail it at a moderate price to the people. This proved a most seasonable relief, and, combined with public works on a small scale, set on foot by the Government, enabled the country to tide with comparative ease over the first months of the summer of 1846, which, it was feared, would prove the most formidable of the whole year, from their embracing the interval between the end of the old and the coming in of the new potato-crop. The potato disease proved, as had all along been asserted by the Protectionists, however formidable in particular localities, very partial in its ravages; the crop of oats was immense; and the stock of potatoes remaining over from the former year was much larger than was supposed. Thus, generally speaking, food was not awanting; but nevertheless, in particular districts, where the peasants' little crops had disappeared, absolute famine stared them in the face, unless they could obtain *some employment to enable them to earn wages to buy the food.* To aid in effecting this most desirable object, Government, in the end of the session of 1846, passed a "Public Works Act,"[1] in virtue of which the Lord-Lieutenant was empowered to require special barony sessions to meet, in order to make presentments for the employment of the people;* the whole of the money requisite for their construction to be, in the first instance, supplied by the Imperial Treasury, but to be after-

[1] 9 & 10 Victoria, c. 1.

* These are resolutions for the undertaking of public works, as roads, bridges, &c., which the Sessions of Justices are empowered to set on foot and levy a rate for their completion.

wards repaid with interest at 3½ per cent, by long-dated assessments, by the districts benefited by the advances. This Act was well conceived in principle, for it went to provide a remedy for the one thing wanted in Ireland, which was not food, but employment; but when applied in practice, it was found to labour under several defects. In particular, the presentments for roads were so numerous, that they threatened to involve the Treasury in an expenditure of a million sterling on a species of improvement which really was unnecessary, and which the Prime Minister, when Parliament met in November, justly characterised as "not wanted." It is well known to every traveller that the roads of Ireland are in general excellent—superior to those either of England or Scotland. Government, therefore, as the danger increased, and the crisis became more imminent, courageously, and as became British Ministers in the circumstances, deviated from the Act, trusting to an indemnity, which they immediately received in the next session of Parliament. A far more effectual relief was afforded by the Drainage Act,[1] which authorised the Lords of the Treasury to issue £1,000,000 to Ireland, and £2,000,000 to Great Britain, for the purposes of drainage. This Act proved of the most important service, especially to Scotland, by which country the greater part of the loan destined to Great Britain was taken up. This was the last Act of any importance in the session, which was closed by her Majesty in person on the 28th August.[2]

[1] 9 & 10 Victoria, c. 101.

[2] Disraeli, Life of Bentinck, 335, 353; Ann. Reg. 1846; Parl. Deb. lxxxviii.

31. Commencement of the Irish famine.

We now approach the most awful and memorable catastrophe in modern times; that in which the most appalling destruction of human life took place, the greatest transposition of mankind was induced, and in which the judgments of the Almighty were most visibly executed upon the earth. It had been anticipated by several sagacious observers, in particular by Sir James Graham, that the disease in the potato would be far more widespread and formidable in 1846 than it had been in the

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

preceding year, from the circumstance of a large portion of the seed being planted with the disease in it.* This prediction was too fatally verified in the succeeding year. In addition to the cause here mentioned, there was another which augmented in the most fatal manner the ravages of the disease. The summer, which had been warm and genial in the earlier months, became suddenly overcharged with moisture and electricity in the last weeks of August. Heavy rains fell for above a fortnight together, accompanied by six violent thunderstorms; a peculiarity of the weather which has always been observed in the seasons when the potato disease has been remarkably widespread and virulent. The work of destruction was fearfully rapid; in one or two nights it was complete, and a blooming crop was converted into a noisome mass of putrefaction.† The consequences were disastrous in the extreme, not only in Ireland, but in most parts of Great Britain. In the former country and in the West Highlands of Scotland, where it formed almost universally the staple food of the people, the potato crop failed almost entirely. Often in a single night, or at most in two or three days, entire fields of this crop became a mass of putrefaction, accompanied by a most noisome smell, which was felt for a long distance round. The disease

* "The difficulty arising from the failure of the present crop is hardly felt at this time. It will be progressive, and become more intense, as the season advances. The proportion which seed bears to an average crop is very large; it has been estimated at not less than an eighth; and when we consider that a considerable portion of this year's crop in Ireland is already destroyed, and that the remainder, if it be saved, must supply food for nine months as well as seed for next year, it is obvious that no ordinary care is required to husband a sufficient quantity of sound potatoes fit for planting in the spring. Unless this be done, the calamity of the present year is but the commencement of a more fatal series."—SIR JAMES GRAHAM to LORD HYTESBURY, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Oct. 25, 1845; *Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 181.

† "In one week, in the end of July, I had passed over 32 miles of potato fields in full bloom. The next time, on 3d August, I beheld with sorrow a wide waste of putrefying vegetation. The stalk remained a bright green, but the leaves were all scorched black. It was the work of a night. Distress and fear were painted on every countenance; there was a general rush to dig and sell, or consume the tainted crop by feeding pigs, before it became totally unserviceable."—Captain MANN'S *Narrative*. NICHOLLS' *Irish Poor-Law*, 310.

was much more violent in the western parts of Great Britain than the eastern, and in rich and highly cultivated localities, than in those more recently brought into cultivation, or where the soil was poor. From Aberdeen to Inverness, where the soil was in general sandy or gravelly, and great part of it had been newly brought into cultivation, the disease was unknown; but in the West Highlands, abreast of this district, it was all but universal, and had almost totally destroyed the crop.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge; Disraeli, Life of Bentinck, 406.

32. Deplorable and alarming state of the country.

What rendered this calamity the more distressing in Ireland and the West Highlands of Scotland was the want of any adequate or efficient system of parochial relief. In both these countries poor-laws had been of recent introduction, and in neither were the administrators of them armed with sufficient power to overcome the stubborn resistance to assessment almost universal among the landed proprietors. In Scotland the Sheriffs could put claimants on the roll, but the Court of Supervision at Edinburgh alone could award them an adequate aliment, which, from the distance of the Hebrides, proved a most inadequate mode of reviewing the decisions of the Parochial Boards, and the able-bodied had no claim for relief. In Ireland matters were much worse. The poor-laws, as established in 1837, had been so defective in power, from providing only for *in-door relief*, and so strongly resisted, that although the Government commission had reported that in ordinary seasons 2,335,000 people required public relief for nearly half the year, the whole poor-rate levied on a rental of £13,000,000 was £306,000, being about 5d. in the pound on the real rental, a sum which would not maintain the now famishing multitude for one month; and this rate, trifling and inadequate as it was, was only levied with extreme difficulty, and in some cases by armed force.*

* The rental of Ireland in 1842 was £13,253,825
The rental of England and Wales, ... 62,546,003
—*Order of House of Commons*, 3d May 1842.
The assessments for the relief of the poor, and persons relieved in Ireland,

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

And the fact that the vast majority of the persons thus suddenly deprived of the produce of their little potato-crofts, their sole means of subsistence during nine months in the year, were without either employment or wages to buy food, afforded a melancholy presage of the devastation which must ensue if Government did not come forward promptly and largely for their relief. The mere furnishing of food was, comparatively speaking, of little importance, for it existed in sufficient quantities in most parts of the country, and was even exported to England to a considerable extent during the famine; * it was employment and wages to above half a million of starving labourers which was the one thing needful![1]

[1] Nicholls' Scotch Poor Law, 201—Irish, 315, 316.

33. Government plans on the subject.

In this awful emergency the conduct both of the Government and of Parliament was in the highest degree courageous and liberal, and such as entitles them to the lasting admiration of posterity. That some errors should have occurred in the mode of grappling with so dire and unprecedented a calamity was inevitable; but the measures upon the whole were judicious, so far as the relief of destitution went, and conducted on such a scale as mitigated to a very great extent its most agonising features. It is only to be regretted that some more durable and productive form could not have been discovered than merely covering good roads with additional loads of metal in return for the splendid liberality of the British government. It was not the fault of Ministers, however,

in the undermentioned years, had been as follows, relief being then administered only in the workhouses :—

Years.	No. in Workhouses.	Sums paid.
1840,	5,468	£37,057
1841,	15,246	110,277
1842,	31,572	281,233
1843,	35,515	244,374
1844,	39,175	269,530
1845,	42,068	316,026
1846,	94,433	435,001

—NICHOLLS' *Irish Poor-Law*, 282, 311, 322.

* The grain exported from Ireland to Great Britain, during the year 1847, was 963,000 quarters.—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, p. 345.

that this was the case. A crisis had arrived which defied all prudential considerations, and set at nought the most sagacious foresight. Notwithstanding their obvious inability even to repay the enormous advances in course of being made by the Treasury, three hundred out of the three hundred and sixty baronies into which Ireland is divided had held presentment sessions, and sanctioned the employment of several millions sterling. The labourers employed on the works, who in September were only 40,000, rapidly increased with the increasing necessities of the country, until, when Parliament met in January, they had reached the enormous number of 570,000, representing with their families at least 2,000,000 human beings. This number swelled in the month of March to the still more appalling figure of 734,000, representing nearly 3,000,000 souls.* The pay weekly distributed to these labourers in October was £200,000 by the hands of 500 pay-clerks; there were 74 inspectors, 36 engineers, 385 assistant surveyors, 3000 check-clerks, and 7000 overseers! The men got from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 10d. a-day after task-work was introduced, which at first met with the most strenuous resistance, but at length was everywhere established. As these wages were more than double of what the people had ever been accustomed to, there was a prodigious run upon them, and farmers holding thirty and forty acres were to be seen on the roads breaking stones like common labourers. As might be

* NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED ON GOVERNMENT WORKS.

			Expenses per month.
1846,	September,	43,000	£78,123
„	October,	114,000	198,024
„	November,	285,000	498,212
„	December,	440,000	627,310
1847,	January,	570,000	728,192
„	February,	708,000	938,000
„	March,	734,000	1,050,772

—NICHOLLS' *Irish Poor-Law*, 315, 316.

The greatest number of persons employed on public works to 15th August 1846, had been 97,000, and the sum distributed was £830,372 to that date.—*Ibid.* 313.

CHAP. XLIII. 1846.

supposed in so extreme a case, great abuses crept in, and no inconsiderable part of the magnificent advances of the British government were wasted on unworthy objects. The tendency to misapply public funds to private purposes, strong in all, but especially so in Ireland, broke forth in the most remarkable manner; numbers received Government pay who did not require it, and great part of those who did, loitered about doing nothing; all the efforts of the overseers were unable to keep the huge swarms of idlers in active operation. Worse still, the attraction of much pay for little work proved an irresistible magnet which drew men from all other employments; the Board of Works became the centre of a colossal organisation which threatened soon to absorb all the labour of the country in unproductive work; the fields were deserted, while the roads were covered with metal, and the foundation of another still more terrible famine was rapidly being laid in the means adopted to allay the first.[1]

[1] Nicholls' Irish Poor-Law, 312, 315; Ann. Reg. 1847, 2, 3.

34. Enormous extent of the distress.

Yet great as were the efforts made by the British government, largely aided by splendid subscriptions from every part of Great Britain, which soon reached £470,000, and were admirably administered by a Central Board, the magnitude of the distress even exceeded them, and seemed to baffle all the efforts of humanity for its relief. So sudden was the calamity, so appalling its universality in some districts of the country, especially in the south and west, that before any measures of relief could reach them, or they could reach the public works set on foot by Government or the local authorities, great numbers of persons of both sexes and all ages perished. Parochial relief was as yet only afforded in the workhouses, and the aversion of the people was at first extreme to entering these gloomy abodes; but stern famine ere long broke down all these feelings, and their doors were besieged from morning to night by crowds beseeching to be taken in,

whose wan cheeks and sunken eyes revealed too clearly the extremities of hunger they had already endured. All the orders, and they were most stringent, issued by the Poor-Law Commissioners to limit the number of admissions, so as to avoid overcrowding, were overpowered, as barriers often are in a dense crowd, by the pressure of the starving multitude, and numbers who got in brought with them the seeds of contagious disorders, which, spreading with frightful rapidity, again thinned the workhouses by the stern hand of death. Yet, with all these dangers before their eyes, the crowds at the doors of the workhouses were immense, and everywhere increasing. The description given by the admirable Chief Commissioner, Mr Nicholls, was universally applicable. "Possessed of a workhouse capable of containing only a few hundred inmates, the guardians are looked to with hope by thousands of famishing persons, and are called on to exercise the mournful task of selection from the distressed objects who present themselves for admission as the last refuge from death. It was no longer a question whether the applicants were fit objects for relief, but which of them would be rejected and which admitted, with the least risk of sacrificing life."[1]

[1] Nicholls, 324, 325.

35. Woeful scenes in the country.

All that the imagination of Dante has figured, all that the pens of Thucydides or Boccaccio have described, all that the pencil of Reynolds has pictured of the terrible and the pathetic, was realised, and more than realised, in that scene of unutterable woe. Often, when a cottage was observed to be deserted, and the wonted smoke no longer seen to issue from its roof—when the anxious neighbours opened the door, they found the whole family lying dead in a circle, with the new-born infant still locked in its mother's arms, having drained the last drop of nutriment in the dying embrace. Numbers of peasants dropped down on the wayside from pure exhaustion, when striving to reach the workhouse or the nearest government works.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

A faithful dog was sometimes found beside the body, emaciated and weak, but true to its trust even in death.

> "Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
> For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
> The much-loved remains of his master defended,
> And chased the hill-fox and the raven away." *

A mournful scene was very frequently presented at the farmhouses during the winter, especially in the remote parts of the country, where the cattle, deprived for long of their wonted meal, were to be seen standing in silence round the deserted door, occasionally giving a low moan at the long-continued absence of the well-known hands that were wont to nourish them, and whose prostration had been so sudden that they had neither strength to feed nor to slay them. The wail of starving children was to be heard on all sides, begging in vain of their parents the slender pittance on which they had long supported life. A melancholy feature of the times was exhibited in the long trains of convoys with provisions which traversed the country on their way from the sea-ports to the coast, guarded by long files of infantry and cavalry, round which the weeping villagers, with their children, crowded supplicating for a handful of meal to stay the pangs of hunger. The scenes exhibited far exceeded in horror anything yet recorded in European history; for, in the nervous words of Lord John Russell, it was a "famine of the thirteenth which had fallen on the population of the nineteenth century."[1]

[1] Nicholls, 325, 326; Personal knowledge.

36. Her Majesty's speech on opening Parliament. Jan. 19.

In the midst of these unparalleled disasters, Parliament met on the 19th January 1847, and her Majesty in person addressed the following observations to her Parliament: "It is with the deepest regret that, upon your again assembling, I have to call your attention to the dearth of provisions which prevails in Ireland and in some parts of Scotland. In Ireland especially the want of the usual

* SCOTT'S *Helvellyn.*

food of the people has been the cause of severe suffering, of disease, and of greatly increased mortality among the poorer classes. Outrages have become more frequent, chiefly directed against property; and the transit of provisions has been rendered unsafe in some parts of the country. With a view to mitigate these evils, large numbers of men have been employed, and have received wages in pursuance of an Act passed in the last session of Parliament. Some deviations from that Act, which have been authorised by the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in order to promote more useful employment, will, I trust, receive your sanction. Means have been taken to lessen the pressure in districts which are most remote from the ordinary sources of supply. Outrages have been repressed as far as was possible by the military and police. It is satisfactory to me to observe that, in many of the most distressed districts, the patience and resignation of the people have been most exemplary. The deficiency of the harvest in France and Germany, and other parts of Europe, has added to the difficulty of obtaining adequate supplies of provisions. It will be your duty to consider what further measures are required to alleviate the existing distress. I recommend to you to take into your serious consideration whether, by increasing for a limited period the facilities for importing corn from foreign countries, and by the admission of sugar more freely into breweries and distilleries, the supply of food may be beneficially augmented."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 3; Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 1, 2.

37. Ministerial plan for the Irish relief.

The debate which followed upon this speech turned, as might have been expected, entirely on the Irish famine, and the means to be adopted for its relief. It was conducted on both sides with great temper and moderation, and an entire abstinence from party feelings or ambition. The magnitude of the calamity had banished all such motives, and inspired a universal desire to hurry forward to its alleviation. Ministers admitted that the Government's first plan of employing the poor on public works

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

had broken down, or rather become impracticable; not so much from any defect in its original conception as from the prodigious numbers who had flocked for employment, threatening to drain away nearly all the labour of the country from productive occupations, and amounting even then to above 500,000 persons. Add to this that great numbers of the most destitute had, from long-continued scarcity of food, fallen into such a state of debility that many of them died before reaching the public works, and such as did reach them were still more frequently unable from sheer exhaustion to do anything. Labour was no longer a test of destitution; on the contrary, things had come to such a point that the capacity to endure its fatigue was rather the reverse. In addition to this, the work expended on the roads, during the four preceding months, had been so immense that all useful employment on them had long since come to an end; and the only effect of now continuing it would be "to render," in the words of one of the government inspectors, "good roads impassable for public conveyances."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 2, 47; Ann. Reg. 1847, 10, 12; Disraeli, Life of Bentinck, 367, 369.

38. Description of the calamity by Lord Brougham.

Upon these grounds, Ministers justly declared that they regarded the misfortunes of Ireland as an imperial calamity, which could no longer be regarded as affecting that part of the empire only, or capable of being relieved from its resources. The magnitude of the evil was such, that the whole empire must contribute to its relief, and the resources of it all would be strained to the uttermost to effect it. Lord Brougham, when the subject was first mooted in the House of Lords, gave the following striking description of the state of Ireland, and the impossibility, by any effort, of legislating calmly or wisely for its relief. "I hold it to be indispensable," said he, "to draw a line of demarcation between temporary and permanent measures. It is impossible, when the cry of hunger prevails over the land—when there is the melancholy substance as well as the cry—when the country is distracted from day to day by accounts of the most heart-rending spectacles

I have ever heard or read of—when there is a deep misery and distress prevailing in and pervading Ireland, rendered only the more heart-rending because the more touching by the admirable and almost inimitable patience with which it has been borne; that at a time when this grievous calamity exists, when there are scenes all over those unfortunate districts which nothing can be found to surpass in the page of history, disease and death ever following in the train of famine; to which nothing exceeding is to be found in the page of Josephus, or on the canvass of Poussin, or in the dismal chant of Dante,—that at this very time, and under the pressure of these sights, from which, with instinctive horror, we avert our eyes, but which we are compelled, by a more reasonable humanity, to make an effort to relieve,—that at such a moment, with such feelings pervading millions in both islands, we should be able, calmly and deliberately, to take up a question of permanent policy, I hold to be utterly and necessarily impossible."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 50, 51; Ann. Reg. 1847, 6, 7.

39. Ministerial plan for relief of Ireland.

Notwithstanding the almost insuperable difficulty thus forcibly stated by Lord Brougham, the measures of Government were vigorous and energetic, and, in the circumstances, among the best that could be adopted. They consisted of two parts. The first was directed to facilitating the introduction of foreign grain and food of all kinds, by the removal of all restrictions on its entrance, and lessening the cost of its transit; the second, of means to insure its conveyance to the starving population of Ireland. Under the first category was included the immediate repeal of all the remaining duties on grain of every kind, even the shilling duty on wheat being for the time taken off, and an entire suspension of the Navigation Laws, so as to give every facility for the importation of food of all kinds from foreign countries. The latter measure was based on the statement, that, to supply the deficiency of food in the British Islands, at least 6,000,000 quarters of grain would require to be imported, being

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

about 850,000 tons; and that, for the carriage of so large a quantity, the whole commercial navy of Great Britain, large as it was, would not suffice. In addition to this, an Act was proposed, modifying the duties on rum and sugar, so as to equalise them with those on grain used in distilleries; the effect of which, it was hoped, would be at once to give some relief to the West India proprietors, and diminish the pressure on the grain resources in Great Britain. These measures, as well as an Act legalising the deviation from the Public Works Act of the preceding session, under the pressure of necessity, all passed both houses without any opposition.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 210, 273, 275, 281, 481, 609, 1220; Ann. Reg. 1847, 21, 52.

40. Amended Poor and Temporary Relief Act, 10 and 11 Victoria, c. 7.

The second class of measures intended for the relief of Ireland consisted of an extensive modification and extension of the Poor Law, and an establishment of committees to distribute relief, independent of work, to such persons as might require it, to be provided for partly by rates and subscriptions, and partly by grants from the public exchequer. It directed that a relief committee should be appointed in every electoral division, consisting of the magistrates, a clergyman of each persuasion, the poor-law guardian, and the three highest rate-payers, and a finance committee appointed of four gentlemen of character and knowledge of business, should be formed to control the expenditure of each Union. Inspecting-officers were also to be appointed, and a central commission, sitting in Dublin, was to superintend and control the working of the whole system. The expense incurred was to be defrayed out of the poor-rates, and when these failed, they were to be reinforced by Government loans, to be repaid by rates subsequently levied. The guardians of the poor were REQUIRED to give relief, either in or out of the workhouse, to the aged and infirm, and to all who were permanently disabled. The workhouses were to be retained as a test, so far as they could be applied, of real destitution; but in cases where accommodation could not be afforded to all who crowded to the doors, relief was to

be administered, not in money, *but in food*, whether the applicants who could not be taken in *were able-bodied, thrown out of work, or not*. The great and important principles established by this Act were, that the administering relief to the destitute was rendered compulsory, and enforced by public boards and commissioners appointed for the purpose, and that the relief was to be extended to out-door applicants and the able-bodied unable to find employment. And of the necessity of this change in the administration of the Poor Laws, no better proof can be furnished than was afforded by the barony of Skibbereen, in the south of Ireland, where nearly *the whole population, consisting of eleven thousand persons, perished of famine*, and the deaths in the workhouses were a hundred and forty in a single month; and yet the rated rental of the Union was £80,000 a-year, the real rental £100,000, and the rate of assessment only 6d. on the pound, while the average of all England was 1s. 7d.! With truth did Lord John Russell say, in introducing this bill, that "in Ireland there was a very great deal of charity, but it was not of the rich to the poor, but of the poor to the very poor."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 42, 43; Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 102, 103.

Under authority of this Act, and of the Temporary Relief Act, relief was administered, with a most unsparing hand, in the year 1847;* and the rapid rise in the sums

* EXPENDED ON THE POOR IN IRELAND, AND NUMBERS RELIEVED BY UNIONS.

Years ending 29th Sept.	Number in Workhouses on 29th Sept.	Total Relieved.		Expenditure on them.
		In-door.	Out-door.	
1845	42,068	142,068		£316,026
1846	94,437	316,928		435,001
1847	86,376	417,139		
1848	124,003	610,463	1,433,482	1,835,631
1849	141,030	932,284	1,210,482	2,177,651
1850	155,173	805,702	368,563	1,430,108
1851	140,031	707,443	47,914	1,141,647
1852	111,515	504,864	13,232	883,267

NICHOLLS' *Irish Report*, 395.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847. 41.

Immense relief afforded under this Act in Ireland.

levied as poor-rates in that year afforded incontestable evidence of the scandalous neglect and parsimony with which it had formerly been administered. Depots of corn and meal were formed, relief committees established, mills and ovens erected, huge boilers, specially cast for the purpose, sent over from England, and large supplies of clothing provided. In July 1847, the system reached its highest point; for "3,020,712 persons received separate rations, of whom 2,265,535 were adults, and 755,178 were children." Three millions of human beings, a larger population than the whole inhabitants of Holland, fed by public charity! History affords no parallel to so magnificent a display of human beneficence. The supplies of all sorts imported into the country were on a corresponding scale. The quantity of all sorts of grain imported in the first six months of 1847 was 2,849,847 *tons*, equal to the support of six millions of people for a whole year. The price of Indian corn, of which the greater part of this immense importation consisted, fell in consequence so rapidly, that while, in the end of February, it was at £19 per ton, by the middle of August it had sunk to £7, 10s. The price of ordinary provisions, though higher than usual, was by no means extraordinary, and not nearly so high as it has been in several years since, when no scarcity whatever was experienced. That of wheat varied from 54s. to 66s. the quarter; the average of the whole year was 62s. 9d.* That of the preceding year had been 54s. 8d., that of the succeeding was 50s. 6d. Happily the next harvest was abundant, and the potato crop free of disease. By the middle of August food was generally abundant, and labour in demand. Relief out of the workhouse was discontinued in one-half of the Unions, and it ceased altogether, under the Temporary Relief Act, on the 12th of September.[1]

[1] Nicholls' Irish Poor-Law, 318, 319—Irish Crisis, 219.

* The average of the *harvest years*, September 1847 to September 1848, was much higher; it was 72s., and for some weeks it was as high as 110s., and even 120s.

1847. 42.

Although, however, the circumstances of the country were so ameliorated that the extraordinary support administered under the Temporary Relief Act ceased, yet the pressure, especially for out-door relief, was only thereby rendered the greater upon the Poor-Law Unions. It soon became excessive upon them, and the utmost difficulty was experienced in separating the deserving from the undeserving, and preventing nearly the whole working classes falling as a burden on the poor-rates. The workhouse test was first applied, but it soon failed, from the impossibility of finding accommodation in these gloomy abodes for the multitudes which thronged their gates. The labour test also failed, from the experienced difficulty of getting any profitable work out of the crowds of persons, many of them old or infirm, who required to be employed upon public works. Provisions gratuitously distributed were found, in too many instances, to be exchanged for drink: the shape in which they were found to be most beneficial was *when cooked*, in the form of porridge or "stirabout," because it became soon sour, if not consumed on the spot, or near it. In spite of every disposition to resist it, out-door relief on a very large scale was fairly forced upon the Poor-Law Commissioners; and the number of indigent persons so relieved increased in an alarming ratio when the Temporary Relief Act came to an end in August 1847. The number of these reached its highest point in March 1848, when the in-door paupers were 140,536, and the out-door 703,762, making together 844,298 persons living on eleemosynary aid. This was independent of 200,000 children at the same time provided with food and clothing by the British Association—making in all 1,044,298 supported at one time by public or private charity, being above an eighth part of the entire population of the Island.[1] And the Commissioners, in their report on this year, say that "they cannot doubt that of this number a large proportion are by this means, and this means alone, daily preserved from death

Ratio of indigent persons relieved.

[1] Commissioners' Report, 1848, 127, 131; Nicholls, 346; Report of British Association, 41.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

through want of food." The history of the world will be sought in vain for a parallel to a visitation of Providence of such magnitude so energetically met by the efforts of public and private beneficence.

43. Great mortality of this period.

Notwithstanding all these exertions, the number of poor persons who died in Ireland during the calamitous years when the famine or its effects lasted, either from starvation or the diseases consequent on insufficient or unwholesome nourishment, was deplorably great. From the tables published by the Census Commissioners, in their deeply interesting sixth report, it appears that the average mortality of Ireland before the dearth was 78,000 annually. From the time, however, when the potato famine began, the number of deaths rapidly increased, and in the year 1847 they reached their highest point, being 249,335. The total deaths from the beginning of 1846, when the scarcity began, to the end of 1850, when its effects may be said to have ended, so far as mortality is concerned, were 985,000, from which, if we deduct 390,000 for the probable average mortality of the period, there will remain 595,000, which may fairly be ascribed to the famine, or the diseases consequent in its train.* A dreadful loss of life, and perhaps unparalleled in recent times in European story, yet not a quarter of what it would in all probability have been, had not Providence granted an

* Deaths in Ireland from 1842 to 1850.

Years.	Deaths.	Years.	Deaths.
1842,	68,732	1846,	122,889
1843,	70,499	1847,	249,335
1844,	75,055	1848,	208,252
1845,	86,900	1449,	240,797
	301,186	1850,	164,093
			301,186

Average of three last years, 77,754

Deaths in five years, two first being of famine,	985,366
Deduct average deaths of three years preceding, 78,000 a-year,	390,000
Died of the famine and its effects,	595,366

—*Census Commissioners' General Report*, No. VI., p. 51.

abundant harvest and crop untainted with disease in 1847, and had not the British government and people met the visitation, when at its worst, with Christian beneficence and a noble patriotic spirit.

44. Immense pecuniary efforts made in Great Britain.

And truly the pecuniary sacrifices and efforts made in Great Britain to mitigate the calamity were on a scale proportioned to its magnitude, and altogether unparalleled in the previous history of the world. When disease and fever appeared, as they did with fearful virulence in the beginning of 1848, three hundred hospitals and dispensaries were established entirely at the expense of Government, which afforded accommodation to twenty thousand patients, and administered out-door relief to above double the number for a very long period. The total sums advanced by the British government to Ireland in aid of the rates, or as a free gift, in 1846 and 1847, were £7,132,268, of which £3,754,739 was to be repaid in ten years, and the remaining £3,377,529 was a free gift. To meet these immense demands upon the Treasury, which were felt as the more distressing, as, from the violence of the monetary crisis which simultaneously set in in Great Britain, the public revenue was becoming very embarrassed, a loan of £8,000,000 was authorised by Parliament, and borrowed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at 3½ per cent. These immense public grants were independent of £470,000 raised by private subscription, one-sixth of which was applied to Scotland, and of £168,000 collected by the "Society of Friends," and distributed for the most part in clothing and provisions. Thus, between public grants and private subscriptions, nearly EIGHT MILLIONS STERLING were, in two years, bestowed by Great Britain upon Ireland—an example of magnificent liberality unparalleled in any former age or country, and forming not the least honourable feature in its long and glorious annals.[1] The portion of the grant which was nominally to be repaid has since been converted,

[1] Nicholls, 320, 321; Irish Crisis, 110.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

with the entire approbation of the nation, into a free gift.*

45. Vast extent of the emigration from Ireland.

Great as was the devastation produced in the Irish population by the famine and its consequent pestilence, it was as nothing compared with the effects produced by it, combined with the results of free trade, upon that agricultural island. Incalculable has been the influence of these *combined causes* on the people of Ireland, and, through them, on the destinies of the world. The first caused them to lose all confidence in the potato, hitherto their sole means of subsistence; the last deprived them for several years of the profitable market for their cereal crops which Great Britain had hitherto afforded, and which was their chief means of paying the rents of their little possessions. The first effect of this universal panic was a migration from Ireland into the adjoining island of Great Britain on a scale unparalleled even in its long annals of suffering. Liverpool and Glasgow were the two points which principally attracted the immigrants, and on them the inundation of Irish paupers was excessive. In the first nine months of 1847, 278,000 immigrants from Ireland landed in Liverpool, of whom only 123,000 sailed from thence to foreign parts, leaving 155,000 as a lasting burden upon its inhabitants. For a long period the Irish paupers who landed were 800, sometimes as high as 1100, in a day.† It was considered matter for public thankfulness when the number sunk, in the end of the year, to 2000 a-week. The inundation into Glasgow at the same

* SUMS ADVANCED UNDER THE DIFFERENT ACTS.

1. Under Public Works Act, 9 & 10 Vict., c. 1, . .	£476,000
2. Under Labour Rate Act, 9 & 10 Vict., c. 107, .	4,850,000
3. Under Local Purposes Act, 9 & 10 Vict., c. 2, .	130,000
4. Under Temporary Relief Act, 10 Vict. c. 7, 22, .	1,676,268
	£7,132,268

† "Liverpool was so inundated that in eleven days they were compelled to afford relief to 198,000 cases, in addition to their own poor."—LORD BROUGHAM, lxxxix. 771.

period, though not so great, was still on a scale of unprecedented magnitude. Between the 1st November 1847 and the 1st April 1848, it was ascertained by an official enumeration, that no less than 42,800 Irish immigrants had landed at the Broomielaw, besides those who came by the railway from Ardrossan, who were about half as many more. Many of these immigrants were in the last state of destitution, and not a few bore with them the seeds of contagious fever, which rapidly spread among the dense population, and not a little aggravated their sufferings in the disastrous year which followed. Upon the whole, it is no exaggeration to say, that in the course of the years 1847, 1848, and 1849, not less than *five hundred thousand persons* came to the British shores from Ireland, the great majority of whom never again left them, and formed no inconsiderable part of the apparent increase of British population in the census of 1851.[1]

[1] Nicholls' Scotch Poor-Law, 205—English Poor-Law, ii. 393—Irish Poor-Law, 328; Personal knowledge; Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 128, 130.

46. Still greater emigration to foreign parts.

The actual value of the crop destroyed in 1847 was estimated by Lord Lansdowne in Parliament at £11,350,000 in potatoes, and £4,600,000 in oats, or in all about £16,000,000.[2] This amount, though very large when compared to the agricultural produce of Ireland itself, was inconsiderable when set beside that of the whole empire, which at that time was estimated in the British Islands at £300,000,000 annually. But, coming as it did upon a population left almost entirely for half the year without wages, and supported solely by the produce of their little patches of ground, and combined as it was with the repeal of the Corn Laws in England, which lowered to two-thirds of its former amount the average price of grain of every kind in the English market, it induced that despair in the minds of all classes which tore up all the attachments, heretofore felt as so strong, of home and country, and sent them in willing multitudes into the emigrant ships to flee from that land of woe. The emigration to foreign countries,

[2] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 356.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

especially America, Canada, and Australia, in consequence became such that no parallel to it is to be found in the whole annals of the world. From the authentic records collected by the Irish Census and Emigration Commissioners, it appears that the total number of *Irish-born emigrants* who left the country between the 30th June 1841 and the 31st December 1855, amounted to the *enormous and almost incredible number of* 2,087,856 *persons*, of whom 75 per cent were between 10 and 40 years of age, that is, in the prime of life with reference to the means of increase. Only 272,828 of the immense multitude had emigrated before 1846, leaving 1,814,928 who had departed subsequent to the introduction of free trade and the commencement of the famine. Of this number 1,600,753 had emigrated to the United States; 411,680 to Canada; and 74,708 to Australia; and only 715 to all other places. History may be searched in vain for a parallel to so extraordinary a deportation of the human race in so short a time.[1] *

[1] Irish Census Report, Part vi. lv.; General Report.

* IRISH-BORN EMIGRANTS, FROM JUNE 30, 1841, TO DEC. 31, 1855.

Years.	United States.	Canada.	Australia.	Total.
1841	11,524	1,755	3,678	16,376
1842	49,300	39,442	937	89,686
1843	23,420	13,578	509	37,509
1844	37,269	16,484	520	54,289
1845	50,206	24,713	50	74,969
1846	68,023	37,888	39	105,955
1847	116,863	97,392	1,188	215,444
1848	153,589	22,724	1,840	178,159
1849	176,643	30,735	7,041	214,425
1850	180,542	24,465	4,045	209,054
1851	215,600	29,312	4,797	249,721
1852	199,535	21,617	6,266	220,428
1853	156,970	22,402	12,746	192,620
1854	111,095	22,922	16,202	150,222
1855	57,164	6,251	15,500	78,999
Total,	1,600,753	411,680	74,708	2,087,856

—*Census Report*, No. VI., p. lv.—The influence of the gold discoveries in Australia, which first came into play in 1853, in increasing the emigration to Australia, and of the Russian War, which broke out in April 1854, in diminishing the general exodus, is very apparent in this very interesting table.

The consequences of this prodigious exodus upon the destinies of the British empire, and the fortunes of the New World, have been great and lasting; and we are still too near the time of its occurrence to be able to estimate them at their real amount. But the effect of it on the population of Ireland itself has already been accurately ascertained; and this presents a result which may fully be considered as unparalleled in modern times. The population of Ireland, by the census of 1841, was 8,175,124 souls, and by that of 1851 it had sunk to 6,552,385, exhibiting a decrease of 1,612,739 persons. Great as this diminution is, it exhibits less than the real diminution of the population which has taken place since 1846. It is justly observed by the Census Commissioners, that "applying the English rates of 1 birth to every 31 persons, and 1 death to every 45, to Ireland, and supposing the immigration and emigration to be equal, there would have been in Ireland, in 1846, no less than 8,558,084 persons; and in 1851, 9,018,799." But as the population in 1851 was found to be only 6,552,385, it follows that between 1846 and 1851, a period of only five years, there had been an actual decline of the inhabitants to the extent of 2,000,000, of which number 1,700,000 can be easily accounted for. This number, how great soever in so short a time, will not appear at all surprising when the extent of the emigration and deaths, above the average number already given, is taken into consideration, which amounted to about an equal number. And the Census Commissioners estimate the decline of population, since 1851 when the census was taken, "including emigration, at 475,102 persons, to the 31st December 1855; so that it is probable that at the present time the population does not much exceed 6,000,000; and this number is still diminishing owing to the emigrants from the country continuing to be greater in amount than the assumed excess of births over deaths."[1] That is, IN TEN YEARS AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF FREE TRADE, AND THE COMMENCEMENT

Effects of this exodus on the Irish population.

[1] Sixth Census General Report, lviii.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

OF THE FAMINE, THE POPULATION OF IRELAND HAD DIMINISHED BY 2,500,000 SOULS.*

48. Which arose mainly from free-trade measures.

Struck with consternation at so unprecedented and melancholy a catastrophe, a large and influential party in Great Britain have done their utmost to represent it as the result, not of the change of commercial policy introduced in 1846, but of the mortality and consequent panic produced by the potato rot, and famine thence arising which ensued in the close of that year. Without disputing what is self-evident, that the terrible nature of the malady in that year must have produced a very great feeling of distrust in the minds of the Irish peasantry in their favourite root, a very little consideration must be sufficient to show that, however powerful at first, this influence soon ceased to operate; and if we would find the cause of the long-continued exodus of the Irish people from 1847 to 1856, we must look for it in the gloom thrown over the prospects of their agricultural industry by the immense importation of foreign grain which followed the changes of 1846, and lowered the price of their staple produce so much, as made the

* DECREASE OF POPULATION IN IRELAND FROM 1847 TO 1851.

Years.	Emigration.	Estimated Ordinary Deaths.	Estimated Ordinary Births.	Natural Increase of Population.
1847	215,444	192,688	278,838	86,750
1848	178,159	194,016	281,636	87,620
1849	214,425	195,963	284,463	88,500
1850	209,054	197,930	287,174	89,387
1851	249,721	192,312	289,121	91,312
	1,066,804	972,309	1,421,232	443,569

Summary.

Extra deaths from famine—supposed,	595,366
Ordinary deaths,	972,309
Estimated immigration to Great Britain,	500,000
Emigration abroad,	1,066,808
	3,134,479
Deduct ordinary births,	1,421,232
Visible decrease,	1,713,247

—*Sixth Census Report*, pp. 16, 17; *General Report*, p. 51.

people despair of being able either to pay their rents or cultivate their land, so as to be able to maintain themselves and their families. The crop of every kind in 1847 was so fine, that by orders of Government a public thanksgiving was returned for it; and the seasons from that time to 1856, with the exception of 1853, were favourable, as is proved by the prices-current of those years, quoted below, which were, till 1852, when the gold came in, extremely low. Some more general and lasting influence must therefore be looked for, if we would discover the real cause of this prodigious exodus, amounting, between 1846 and 1856, to 1,800,000, and which for several years rendered population declining in the whole empire. And if we look at the immense importation of foreign grain throughout the period, the fall in the exports of Irish during the same years, the prices-current of agricultural produce, and the proved diminution of Irish cereal cultivation, we shall have no difficulty in seeing what the cause really was.*

* Prices and Imports of Grain, and Irish Exports and Acres in Grain from 1845 to 1856.

Years.	Average of Wheat per Quarter.	Importation of Grain into Great Britain.		Total Importation—Qrs. Foreign.	Export of Irish Grain to England—Qrs.	Irish Acres under Cereal Crops.	Irish Emigration.
		Wheat and Wheat-meal—Qrs.	Other Grain—Qrs.				
1845	50s. 10d.	1,140,000	1,290,000	2,430,000	3,251,000	3,194,582	74,969
1846	54s. 8d.	2,340,000	2,410,000	4,750,000	1,814,802	2,856,694	105,955
1847	69s. 9d.	4,460,000	7,450,000	11,910,000	963,000	3,174,424	215,444
1848	50s. 6d.	3,080,000	4,440,000	7,520,000	1,946,000	3,149,556	178,159
1849	44s. 3d.	4,800,000	5,860,000	10,660,000	1,426,000	3,499,401	214,425
1850	40s. 3d.	4,830,000	4,190,000	9,020,000		2,776,686	209,054
1851	38s. 6d.	5,330,000	4,290,000	9,620,000		2,833,387	249,721
1852	40s. 9d.	4,160,000	3,589,000	7,740,000	(No re-	2,743,736	220,428
1853	53s. 3d.	6,230,000	3,930,000	10,160,000		2,832,564	192,620
1854	72s. 5d.	4,470,000	3,430,000	7,900,000	turns.)	2,785,343	150,222
1855	74s. 8d.	3,210,000	3,110,000	6,320,000			78,999
1856	69s. 2d.	5,207,147	4,132,278	9,339,425			79,000

—Tooke *On Prices*, v. 462; Porter, 345; *Census Report*, No. V. p. 54; *Agricultural Report*, 1852, v.

This very interesting table speaks to the eye, and speaks volumes. As regularly as the importation of foreign grain, and especially wheat, increased, did the Irish exports of grain sink, and the emigrants from that country increase. When the importation of foreign grain had turned 10,000,000 quarters annually, the export of Irish grain sunk a half, and the emigration turned 200,000.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847. 49.

Voluntary relief in Ireland, and causes of its small amount.

It is not to be imagined, from all that has been said, that the Irish people are destitute of charitable feelings, or that the poor were driven out of the country by the voluntary failure of the industrial and affluent classes to maintain them. There is no country in the world in which the poor are more kind and humane to each other. Previous to the introduction of the Poor Laws in 1837, the destitute, who exceeded 2,000,000, were maintained almost entirely in this way, and their support, it was computed, cost the industrious poor £1,500,000 a-year. If the landowners were apparently deficient in that duty, it is to be ascribed mainly to the unhappy, distracted state of the country, which rendered absenteeism almost unavoidable with all who had the means of leaving it; and the enormous amount of their mortgages, the interests of which absorbed £9,000,000 out of the £13,000,000 rental. This prodigious burden was mainly owing to the circumstances that the habits of expenditure were contracted during the high prices of the war, and the debt remained under the halved rental produced by the contraction of the currency during the peace. But the effect of it, of course, was that the whole public burdens fell on the clear rental of £4,000,000; and when the poor-rates amounted, as they did in 1847, to £2,000,000, they *absorbed half, and in many of the Unions the whole, of the landlord's income.* Amidst this scene of reckless extravagance and industrial suffering, there is one noble and redeeming feature, which should be recorded to the eternal honour of the Irish character. How destitute soever the great majority of the emigrants may have been when they first set out, the strength of the domestic affections among them was such, that from the time when the great exodus began, the sums they remitted to bring their relations out to the land of promise were so large, that they rose from £460,000 in 1848, to £1,350,000 in 1853. To the immense fund thus provided by the strenuous industry and undying affection of the Irish poor on transatlantic

shores, for their relations left at home, the magnitude of the continued stream of emigration which has since that time left the Irish shores, and the wonderful subsequent improvement wrought in the country, are mainly to be ascribed.*

50. Reflections on the Irish famine.

Such are the details of the Irish famine of 1846, and its effects in subsequent years, the most terrible calamity in modern times, and which, in the rapidity with which it mowed down the human race, greatly exceeded anything recorded in the annals either of war or pestilence. Even the Moscow retreat, or the siege of Sebastopol, occasioned while they lasted a much less destruction of mankind. If to this we add the astonishing fact of an emigration having taken place from the country to the extent of above 2,000,000 souls in eight years after, it may safely be affirmed that the calamity, both in present magnitude and ultimate importance, is unparalleled in authentic history. It demonstrates, in the most striking manner, the enormous extent of the social evils under which Ireland laboured, when Providence adopted such awful means to remedy them, and strikingly illustrates the limited extent of human vision on the subject, when narrowed by party ambition. All that the collected wisdom of the nation in the House of Commons, could suggest during forty years had been to admit forty landless Catholics into Parliament, give every starving peasant with £5 a-year a municipal vote, and take £200,000 a-year from the Church to devote it to the purposes of secular education. But if both governors

* Sums remitted home by Irish Emigrants from 1848 to 1854.

1848,	£460,000
1849,	540,000
1850,	957,000
1851,	990,000
1852,	1,250,000
1853,	1,340,000
1854,	1,234,000

—*Irish Census, Sixth Report*, lvi.; and Mr Everett's *Letter* to Lord Malmesbury, Dec. 1, 1852.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

and governed were grievously at fault in the conduct of Irish affairs before the visitation of Providence fell upon them, yet it must be added, to their, honour that both nobly redeemed their errors when it arrived. Never did Government meet a great national calamity in a more intrepid and generous spirit; never did the distant and the affluent aid them more nobly in their efforts to mitigate it; never did the sufferers bear their pains with more patience and magnanimity, or evince a more magnificent proof of domestic affection, than in the efforts made by such as survived to extricate their relatives from the scene of woe. If the former period, whether as regards the rulers or their subjects, makes us blush, the present makes us proud of human nature; and in this, as in so many other pages of history, we may discern the intentions of Providence in what appear at first sight its darkest dispensations, and learn that it is sometimes well for nations as well as individuals to be in affliction. It will be the pleasing duty of the annalist in a future chapter to show that the virtues elicited during this fiery trial were not without their reward even in this world, and to trace, in the rapid rise of Irish prosperity in subsequent years, the direct consequences of the sufferings undergone during a period when the country seemed crushed to the earth in affliction.

51. Potato famine in Scotland at this period.

Ireland was not the only country by which the potato blight was experienced at this period. Scotland also shared largely, though not so universally, in the same calamity. Symptoms of the disease appeared in the autumn of 1846, but not so generally as to excite any serious alarm; but in August 1847 they became so common as to prove that nearly the entire crop, especially in the Highlands and Western Islands, had perished. As the potato furnished food for at least two-sevenths of the entire population of the country, and that the most destitute portion of it, this afforded the most serious ground for alarm, the more especially as, from the simultaneous occurrence of a still

greater calamity in Ireland, there was little chance of any effective support being received from England. But in this extremity Scotland, though left to her own resources, was true, as she had so often been in former periods of her history, to herself. She did not demean herself by supplication, nor humble herself by lamentation. She neither asked for nor received succour from the Government of her richer and more powerful neighbour. She boldly looked the calamity in the face, and herself set about combating it.

52. Means taken in Scotland to combat it.

Subscriptions to relieve the destitution in the Western Highlands were immediately set on foot in all parts of the country: that in Glasgow alone, in a few weeks, exceeded £30,000. Corn and meal were instantly bought up and despatched by sea to the afflicted quarters; committees were appointed both to collect subscriptions in the richer, and distribute the succours in the famishing districts. Fortunately the poor-law machinery, established two years before over the whole country, afforded the means both of collecting information as to the wants of the people and distributing the charity. The landholders generally acted in the most liberal and patriotic manner, and the advances made under the Drainage Act for Great Britain, the greater part of which the Scotch had the sense to take up for themselves, afforded in many places both the means of employing the poor in the mean time and permanently improving the country. The assessment for the poor-rate was largely augmented, in proportion to the necessities of the case;* and the splendid sum of £77,683 remitted by the British Association, being one-sixth of the sum they had collected, was thankfully received, and proved of essential service. By these means, aided by two depots for the sale of corn established by Government in

* Poor-Rate levied in Scotland from 1846 to 1850.

1846,	£295,232	1849,	£577,044
1847,	433,915	1850,	581,553
1848,	544,344	—Nicholls' *Scotch Poor-Law*, 269.	

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

the Western Islands, the crisis was surmounted, and that without any external aid but what the Scotch owed to the generous benevolence of their southern fellow-countrymen. Yet was the suffering endured intense and long-continued, for the potato crop failed to a certain extent for several years after, and it led to a very general emigration on the part of all who could get away, which added to the immense flood of human beings which in those years flowed across the Atlantic to the land of promise in the New World.[1]

[1] Nicholls' Scotch Poor-Law, 200, 201, 204, 241; Sir J. M'Neill's Report, 1851.

53. Lord George Bentinck's project for Irish railways.

So completely did the all-engrossing subject of the Irish famine absorb the attention both of the legislature and the public during this disastrous year, that scarcely any other subject for a long period occupied the attention of Parliament. The debates on the subject, however, which were full, earnest, and full of patriotic and philanthropic feeling, have lost much of their interest in consequence of the publication of the authentic records and parliamentary tables, of which an abstract has now been given. One project advanced on the subject deserves particular attention, both from the energy and talent with which it was supported, and the immense accumulation of facts bearing on the state of Ireland which it brought to light. Lord George Bentinck had meditated deeply on the condition of Ireland, and the means of affording it relief; and it appeared to him that these means were to be found in the extension to that country of the causes which had relieved Great Britain in 1841 and 1842. England was then in nearly as deplorable a state as Ireland was at this time. Fifteen hundred thousand persons were then maintained by the poor-rates, of whom 483,000 were able-bodied labourers. What, then, absorbed this immense mass of starving *prolétaires*, and induced in its stead the vast demand for labour and general prosperity of 1845 and 1846? It was ridiculous to ascribe this to the tariff and reduction of import duties. So great a change could never have been

produced by lowering the price of bread a penny, and that of meat three-halfpence a pound, or cotton five-sixteenths of a penny. It was something affecting the *demand for labour*, not the price of commodities, which must have caused the change, and what this something was could admit of no doubt. It was railway enterprise which effected the prodigy: it was the expenditure of from fifteen to twenty millions on the wages of labour annually, for a course of years, which at once absorbed the unemployed poor, raised the remuneration they received, and, by adding immensely to their means of consumption, caused that general rise of prices which diffused general gladness and cheerfulness among all who dealt in them. It was by the extension of a similar system to Ireland that the general distress was to be mitigated, and labour employed in a permanently useful and durable form. But the poverty of the country precluded the possibility of this, except by the aid of Government.[1]

[1] Disraeli, Life of Bentinck, 338. 339.

54. His railway scheme.

Impressed with these ideas, Lord George was engaged during the whole autumn of 1846, with the characteristic energy of his character, in collecting information on the subject, and obtaining from practical men the knowledge requisite to put his project in an intelligible and practical form; and on the 4th February 1848 he introduced it in an elaborate speech in the House of Commons. "It is not my intention," said he, "to make a long preface on the state of Ireland. Suffice it to say, there are 500,000 able-bodied men in that country living upon the funds of the State, commanded by a staff of 11,587 persons, and all employed upon works which have been variously described as 'worse than idleness;' by the yeomanry of Ulster as 'public follies;' by the inspector-general of these works himself, as 'answering no other purpose but that of obstructing the public conveyances.' How long is this to continue? Is the immense array now living at the expense of the State to be permanently employed in works of no earthly utility? The first requisite of labour is to be productive; and the

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

relief afforded by the employment, even on the greatest scale, of the labouring poor, will be evanescent if it is not realised in some works which may add to the funds for its future maintenance.

55. Continued.

"Doubtless a great calamity is hanging over Ireland; but we who, in former times, far less rich than the present, have seen £103,000,000, on an average of three years, annually spent by the State, are not to be cast down by a loss of agricultural produce which may be estimated at £10,000,000. On the contrary, I trust that good will come out of evil, and that, instead of lying down and weeping over our misfortune, like children lost in a wood, we shall have the spirit to look our difficulties fairly in the face, and be resolved to exercise a firm determination to overcome them. I cannot forget that, in very recent times, England, though burdened, conjointly with Ireland, with two millions of Irish poor, did support from her parish rates 1,427,000 poor, of whom 490,000 were able-bodied labourers, who were sustained by the parish. If we look at Great Britain as she was in 1841 and 1842, we shall both be filled with hope as to the future of Ireland, and discern the means by which, under Providence, its amelioration is to be brought about. What has brought England out of that woeful state of depression into its present state of affluence and prosperity? It is not the reduction of five-sixteenths of a penny on the duty on cotton—it is not the admission of 27,000 head of horned cattle free of duty, or of timber at a reduced rate, which has done this; it is railway enterprise which has effected the prodigy. It is the employment, for a course of years, of £13,000,000 on home railways; it is the employment of 200,000 labourers, at 22s. a-week, who have been called from the parish and the workhouse to execute them, which has done the thing, and occasioned that rise in the price of commodities of all sorts which is the surest sign of general prosperity, and that

increased consumption of articles of comfort, which is so agreeable to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

56. Continued.

"So far back as 1836, the royal commission, of which Lord Devon was the head, charged with inquiry into the condition of Ireland, reported that a system of railways should be carried out in the country, and that it should be done at the public expense. This has so far been acted upon, that, within the last few years, Acts of Parliament have been passed for 1582 miles of railroad; but of these, from want of capital in the country, or of enterprise, only 123 miles have been completed. In England, during the same time, 2600 miles of railway have been completed, and 4000 more are in course of being so. The population of Ireland is not much inferior to that of England, and the most experienced persons consider population as the first element in railway success. Let Government then come forward at once, and boldly, to aid railway enterprise in Ireland, and we may confidently hope, ere long, to see the same resurrection of Ireland which we have recently witnessed with so much success in Great Britain.

57. Continued.

"The plan I propose is this: Let Government engage, for every £100 provided by a railway company, to give £200 from the public funds, at the same rate of interest at which they themselves borrow it, which at present may be taken at 3½ per cent. There is not a railway in Ireland which would not produce at least £7 for every £200 advanced by Government, so that the security will be ample, and the State will not lose a shilling by the adventure. Such a system would put an immense mass of labourers in motion in every part of the country, and would, at the same time, set free the capital of the shareholders, so as to enable them to devote it to the improvement of their estates. Such would, to a certainty, be the improvement of the land adjoining these railways, that it might be calculated upon adding £23,000,000 in twenty-five years to the value of land in Ireland, besides giving

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

bread for four years to 500,000 labourers, which would go far towards surmounting the evil effects of the famine. The sum proposed to be advanced by Government is £16,000,000, in addition to £8,000,000 provided by Irish capitalists; and the lines constructed, 1500 miles. We have the authority of a most competent observer, Mr Smith of Deanston, for the assertion, that the improvement on the land, for a mile on each side of the railways thus constructed, would be so great, that it would ere long pay the whole cost of construction. The loan is to be repaid in thirty years by instalments; the first payment commencing seven years after a certificate has been given of the completion of the railway.

58. Concluded.

"Indirectly, Government will be benefited, and that, too, to the full amount of the interest of the loans expended by such an outlay. On comparing the amount paid to Excise overhead by the Scotch above the Irish, we find it is £1, 0s. 2d., or, deducting soap and brick duties, not paid in Ireland, 16s. 3½d. Now if, by means of this expenditure of £16,000,000, we have 500,000 labourers employed at good wages, such as are earned in England, it is not unreasonable to presume that their expenditure on excisable articles will come up to the Scotch. This would give £447,448 additional revenue from the Excise alone to the Government. Then in the Customs, there is a difference of 7s. 4d. a-head between Scotland and Ireland; and this would represent a sum of £202,000. Thus between the two there will be an addition to the revenue of £649,000, or 3½ per cent on £18,000,000. It is a gross calumny to say that Irish loans are never repaid; many instances exist to the contrary: the Devon commission has reported the reverse. If by this measure I can fill the bellies of the Irish people with good beef and mutton, and their cottages with fine wheat and sound beer, and their pockets with English gold to purchase the blankets of Wiltshire, the fustians of Manchester, and the cotton prints of Stockport,[1] I, though a Saxon, will

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 774, 802; Ann. Reg. 1847, 54, 58.

answer with my head for their loyalty, and will lead through their warm hearts and sympathies, not to sever, but to cement, the union of Ireland and England."

59. It is opposed by Ministers.

So obviously well-founded were the allegations, and so reasonable the proposals in this very remarkable speech, and so entirely did it coincide with and work out the manly and patriotic efforts of the Government to combat the great prevailing calamity, that, if it had been brought forward at an earlier period, and before the plans of Ministers had been matured, it is probable that it would have been readily embraced by the Administration. As it was, they did not oppose the leave given to bring in the bill, and it was for some time hoped that the Cabinet would adopt the measure. But, unfortunately, before it came the length of a second reading, commercial embarrassments had so much increased in Great Britain, owing to the immense import of grain, that Government, not unnaturally, shrunk from the responsibility of going into the money market, and still farther increasing the pressure, by borrowing £16,000,000, in any form, to set the undertaking on foot. Perhaps, too, there was a less excusable jealousy on the part of Ministers to substitute for their own plan for Irish relief that propounded by the Protectionist chief. The result was, that, without opposing Lord George Bentinck's bill on its first introduction, they mustered all their forces to throw it out on the second reading; and on this occasion Sir R. Peel lent them his aid in a very powerful speech.[1]

[1] Disraeli, Bentinck, 389, 391; Ann. Reg. 1847, 60, 64.

60. Sir R. Peel's speech against the measure.

"The state of the country," said the Right Honourable Baronet, "is this: Last year there was a balance of receipts in exchequer over expenditure of £2,800,000. It is impossible to expect for the present financial year, or the next, a more favourable state; and if the necessary and agreed-to expenditure for the relief of Irish suffering is taken into consideration, which will probably amount to £10,000,000 sterling, we shall at the very least, by the end of next year, be landed in a deficit of

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

£6,000,000 or £7,000,000. Is this a time when it would be either prudent or expedient to go into the market for an additional sum of £16,000,000, which must either be contracted for in a direct way or in a fresh issue of exchequer bills to that amount? It is a mere delusion to say you can pledge the credit of Government to commercial undertakings without subjecting the country to any risk whatever. How is the money to be raised without entailing a burden for its interest upon the country? It is very easy to say the sum expended will enrich the country to as large an extent as itself. Very possibly it may, but will that relieve Government of the burden of the £600,000 a-year required for the interest of the exchequer bills on loan by which it is provided? Will such a proceeding not tend to injure public credit, and cripple the finances of the State, if required by unforeseen exigencies to be applied to other purposes? The credit of the State is one of the elements of our national strength, and you cannot impledge it to commercial speculations without foregoing its application in some other direction, which may be still more indispensable, and it is in fact the same thing as applying the sums raised by direct taxation in the same way.

61. Continued.

"It it said the expenditure of this money will increase the value of land in Ireland to as great an amount as the sum expended. Twenty-three millions is to accrue to the Irish landlords in consequence of railway enterprise! Then why do they not themselves attempt it? Lord Granby tells us the fishermen of Chaddagh will be able to fish up £4000 a-night if the railroads are made! Are not these precisely the commercial considerations which should induce the Irish themselves to enter into them? But it is said they have no money; but is there not that, whence, when it really exists, money is so easily raised in this country, the prospect of gain? If land is difficult to be got by the railway companies, by

all means simplify the acquisition of it in the country by Act of Parliament; but do not on account of any such technical difficulty involve Great Britain in a serious financial embarrassment, the consequences of which, in the present state of the country, no man living can foresee.

62. Concluded.

"The proposed grant to Irish railways is worse than useless; it would be pernicious. If the Government are to hold the doctrine that Ireland is different from other countries, that it is not fit to be intrusted with its own concerns, and that the Administration must do everything for it, rely upon it, its industrial inactivity and religious animosities will continue, and the very springs of improvement in the country will be dried up. She must be left to her own energies if she is ever to be righted; 'Aidez-toi et le ciel t'aidera,' applies to her as well as to all other countries. I firmly believe that if you do not overpower Irish commercial enterprise by English Government interference, that effect will take place. Hitherto grants of public money to Ireland, given with no unsparing hand by this country, have led only to endless jobbing, profligate expenditure, and an entire failure of the ends for which they were given. It is by the salutary interference of private and local interest in the administration of the money to be expended that this inherent propensity can alone be checked. I call on the Irish landlords to put their own shoulders to the wheel, and by their own energy and self-reliance to work out the improvement of their own country. If they will do this, if, forgetting religious and political differences, they will seek in good faith the mitigation of the calamity under which their country is labouring,—if they will do this, my firm conviction is, that they will do more to promote the interests of their native land, than if, resigning themselves to sloth, idleness, and despair, they place all their confidence in Government grants, and all their hope in Government patronage."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 66, 86; Ann. Reg. 1847, 65, 67.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847. 63. Division on the subject, and reflections on it.

This speech, which was loudly cheered by the house, and was too agreeable to a Ministry which already foresaw a very serious financial embarrassment approaching at no distant period, not to be implicitly adopted by them, proved decisive against the proposal of Lord George Bentinck, which was thrown out on the second reading by a majority of 204, the numbers being 322 to 118. The English Protectionists alone supported it; not only the whole Whigs, Peelites, and Liberals, but the *whole Irish Catholic members*, including young O'Connell, Mr Sheil, O'Connor Don, and Mr Smith O'Brien, voted against it![1] Yet it is now evident that the majority composed of this strange coalition was decidedly in the wrong, and that the proposal was the one best calculated to combine present relief with ultimate benefit to Ireland. The arguments urged on the other side by Sir R. Peel, and so loudly cheered by the majority of Liberals and Irish Catholics, were so obviously sophistical, that it is impossible not to suspect that so powerful a mind as his was inflamed rather by a feeling of political animosity against the mover, than influenced by the real merits of the question at issue in bringing them forward. The considerations he adduced were perfectly well-founded in the abstract, but they were wholly inapplicable to the question at issue. It was no doubt true, that in the general case it is inexpedient to engage Government in mercantile speculations; but what application has that rule to a case when a country is threatened with a calamity far worse than any foreign war, and is utterly destitute, without Government support, of the means of averting it? It was mere mockery to call on the Irish landlords to put their shoulder to the wheel, when it was well known that nine millions out of the thirteen millions which constituted their rental, were absorbed by the interest of mortgages, and that more than half of what remained would be drawn off in poor-rates, even supposing, what could not be expected, that it was, amidst the general failure of the potato

[1] Parl. Deb. xc.123, 125.

crop, all collected. It was mere exaggeration to represent Lord George Bentinck's bill as adding sixteen millions to the sum already proposed to be borrowed for Ireland, when he knew that eight millions of it was already agreed to, and that the only question was, whether it would not be more expedient to *extend* the sum to sixteen millions, and thereby render it all productive, than retain it at eight, and thereby keep it all in an unproductive form. These considerations are so obvious, that they could never have escaped so acute a mind as Sir R. Peel's, though, like a skilled debater, he carefully kept them out of view; and they lead to the conclusion that his opposition to this well-conceived project was founded on personal hostility, and intended as a requital for his own ejectment from office by the noble mover, by throwing out an equally well-founded bill, on which he had staked the existence of his administration. And thus within a year were two bills, alike salutary in their operation, and called for by the circumstances of Ireland, sacrificed to the rivalry of parties in the British senate!

64. Character of Lord George Bentinck.

It is observed by Mr Disraeli, in his very interesting Life of Lord George Bentinck, that the common saying, that when great men arise they have a mission to accomplish, and do not disappear till it is fulfilled, is not always true. After all his deep study, and his daring action, Hampden died on an obscure field before the commencement of the mighty struggle which he seemed born to direct. In the great contention between the patriotic and the cosmopolitan principle, which had hardly begun, and on the issue of which the fate of these Islands, as a powerful community, depends, Lord George Bentinck appeared to be produced to represent the traditionary influences of our country in their most captivating form. Born a natural leader of the people, he was equal to the post. Free from prejudices, his large mind sympathised with all classes of the realm. His courage and constancy were never surpassed by man. He valued life only

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

as a means of fulfilling duty, and truly may it be said of him that he feared nothing but God. Upon calmly reviewing the course of his unfortunately too brief career, history must ratify this warm eulogium pronounced by an attached friend. His mind is not only interesting as an extraordinary example of the success of energy and perseverance in overcoming great natural disadvantages, but as the finest type of a character which has now become purely historical, from society having changed so much, at least in these Islands, that its reproduction has become impossible.[1]

[1] Life of Bentinck, 583, 584.

65. His family, and early history.

Born of the ducal house of Portland, he inherited from his long line of ancestors the genuine Whig principles by which they have always been distinguished. Early in life he was for three years private secretary to Mr Canning, who was married to a sister of the Duchess of Portland, and under his tuition he combined with the old principles of his family the wide philanthropic views so eloquently supported by that brilliant parliamentary leader. He was accordingly a warm supporter of civil and religious liberty, desired not only emancipation, but even state establishment, for the Roman Catholics in Ireland, and he advocated the Reform Bill from having shared, as so many other of the Whig leaders did, the strange delusion that it was an aristocratic and conservative measure, which would prove protective to the great producing interests of the State. But no sooner did the reverse appear, and it became evident that Sir R. Peel, at the head of the commercial and urban interests of the empire, was about to make war on the agricultural and productive, than he went over with Lord Stanley to the other side, and became the determined opponent of the new Free-trade policy now adopted by the Government. This at once made a change in his position in Parliament. Though he had sat through eighteen years as the representative of King's Lynn, yet he had never taken an active part in the debates, and was almost entirely engrossed by sporting pursuits, of which

he was passionately fond. But on the breaking up of the Conservative party by Sir R. Peel's proposal to repeal the Corn Laws, he was in a manner forced to the front by the desertion of its natural leaders; and his political friends, to whom his great abilities and indefatigable energy were well known, ere long gladly conceded to him, or rather compelled him to accept, the honourable position of leader. In the strife on the breach, or when the vessel is drifting on the breakers, the most capable seldom fails to find himself at the head.

66. His mental qualities.

It was the vigour and energy of his mind, joined to the fearless determination of his character, his quiet perception and prompt decision, which procured for him this honourable distinction. He was, comparatively speaking, inexperienced in debate, was little skilled in oratory, and was by no means gifted by nature with the physical qualities which are generally so powerful in ruling popular assemblies. His person was tall, his figure fine, and his air commanding; but his voice was shrill and feeble, and when he began to speak he generally laboured under what was to his auditors a painful hesitation in expression. But these impediments, which would have been fatal to an ordinary speaker, were in his case, as they had been in that of M. de Villèle, compensated, and more than compensated, by the vigour of his understanding, the tenacity of his memory, the intrepidity of his character, and the indomitable energy of his will. Fearless of the consequences, he threw himself into the breach, when so many others more practised than himself held back, or retired in despair, and, supported by a sincere love of his country, and an entire devotion to its cause, renewed the conflict, when to all appearance it was hopeless, and soon acquired the lead of the Opposition, from the universal feeling that he deserved it.

The great thing which so quickly gave him, though a young man, such an ascendancy among the veterans on both sides by whom he was surrounded or opposed, was

CHAP. XLIII.

1847. '67.

What gave him this rapid ascendancy.

that his mental qualities precisely suited the wants at that period of the House of Commons. He was a great statistician, and devoted the energies of his mind and his immense powers of research, to deducing from the facts which he had collected the conclusions most serviceable to the industrial interests of his countrymen. He was therefore an invaluable advocate for the agricultural, West India, and shipping interests, which were threatened with invasion during the brief period of his active Parliamentary career. The pains which he took, and the labour which he underwent, in collecting and digesting from private sources information which he produced in his speeches, were almost inconceivable, and, beyond all doubt, brought him prematurely to the grave. He had one admirable quality, which is by no means universal among speakers and writers on statistical subjects: he was not only scrupulously correct in his facts, but still more cautious *not to overstate his case*, and even ready to mention on his own side all the considerations which went to diminish the weight or lessen the amount of the figures which he brought prominently forward. Thus he not only acquired a character for accuracy, and came to be referred to as an authority on matters of detail, but he deprived his opponents of the advantage, often so considerable in debate, of pointing out an unintended exaggeration, or an unobserved opposite consideration.

68. His private character and habits.

His private character and turn of mind had procured for him the warm friendship, and almost romantic admiration, of a large circle of private friends, composed of the first young men in the country. On the turf, to which in early life he was so much devoted, he was regarded as the model of honour, insomuch that many of the most delicate disputes between sporting characters were referred to his decision. In private life he was simplicity itself; he had the unassuming modesty which, when accompanied by great talents, is the invariable mark of a magnanimous mind. Utterly devoid of vanity, he was,

as such men generally are, naturally proud; he could not stoop to conquer; and sometimes, by the unbending character of his mind, was obliged to forego advantages that might otherwise have been within his reach. His countenance was a model of manly beauty—his face oval, the forehead high, the nose aquiline and delicately moulded, the upper lip short, the eye keen and flashing. He sold his magnificent stud of racers, one of which soon after won the Derby, when he felt himself called on to engage in the greater race of political life, in defence of what he regarded as the best interests of the nation. Kind and affectionate in all the relations of domestic life, and indifferent to the ordinary excitements of society, he was absorbed in his last years entirely in the great contests going on in Parliament. Like Mr Pitt, he was married to his country, and, like him, he fell a victim, while still in the vigour of manhood, to his unceasing devotion to its cause.[1]

[1] Disraeli, Life of Bentinck, 38, 39, 40.

69. The Budget of 1847. Feb. 22.

The Budget of 1847, brought forward on the 22d February, and based on the experience of the current financial year, which was to expire on the 5th April next, was much more favourable than might have been anticipated, and was remarkable chiefly for the utter insensibility to the approaching danger by which it was distinguished. "The current quarter, the first of 1847," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Feb. 22, "exceeds the corresponding quarter of last year by £500,000, and although circumstances obvious to the most unreflecting mind lead to the conclusion that we have arrived at the period when our onward progress may be checked, as it had been in the year 1825 and 1836, yet *nothing warrants the belief that it will be attended with anything like the revolution which occurred on these occasions.* The experience of the past has not been lost upon us, and trade is conducted now on sound, not on speculative principles. We have now truer notions of currency, and, instead of purchasing Mississippi stock and Pennsylvania bonds, have been

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

investing our capital in works of great importance at home. I am therefore confident that no such results as had occurred formerly will follow any temporary check on our onward progress. Bullion, indeed, has been exported for the purchase of food, and that in its turn has produced a temporary pressure on the money market, which has checked enterprise. The demand for bullion, however, has not been very formidable, for there is only £1,200,000 less gold now in the Bank than there was on the 13th February last year. I therefore conclude that we have paid for the corn in manufactured goods; a circumstance on which I congratulate the country, as well as on the better position which the Bank of France has lately assumed—an event which must always be of importance to this country. On the 5th January there was a balance in the Treasury of £9,000,000, and, in consequence, for the first time in the memory of the oldest financier, it has been unnecessary to have recourse to deficiency-bills, and the quarterly balance in the Exchequer has been sufficient to pay the dividends."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 317, 318; Ann. Reg. 1847, 87, 88.

70. Its details.

The income of the financial year 1847-48 the Chancellor of the Exchequer took at £52,065,000, and the expenditure at £51,576,000, exhibiting a probable surplus of £500,000.* In this statement, however, no mention was made of the advances to Ireland, which required to be provided in the year, and which were of the most formidable amount. The sum hitherto advanced for Irish work was £2,000,000; and a farther advance of

* Estimated Income and Expenditure.

Income.		Expenditure.	
Customs,	£20,000,000	National Debt,	£28,045,000
Excise,	13,700,000	Charges on Consolidated Fund,	2,700,000
Stamps,	7,000,000	Army,	6,840,074
Land and Assessed Taxes,	4,270,000	Navy,	7,561,876
Property-tax,	5,300,000	Ordnance,	2,679,127
Post-Office,	845,000	Miscellaneous,	3,750,000
Crown Lands,	120,000		£51,576,077
Miscellaneous,	330,000		
	£52,065,000		

—*Parl. Deb.* xc. 324, 326.

£8,000,000 would, to all appearance, be required. No taxation, no increase of the property-tax, could provide so large a sum, and therefore it was indispensable to go into the money market; and it was deemed advisable to supply the deficiency at once in the form of a loan rather than disturb the Bank by requiring farther advances from its coffers. The large balance in the Exchequer at the beginning of the year would be all drained away by the advances to Ireland, and to England and Scotland, under the Drainage Acts, which were beginning to tell seriously. Nothing remained, therefore, but a loan, and it was at once agreed to. The terms on which it was contracted were, considering the circumstances of the times, more favourable than could have been expected. They were, £89, 10s. for £100 stock—the interest to be at 3½ per cent. In the course of his speech on this subject, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated the extraordinary fact, that while Great Britain was making such efforts for relief of Irish distress, "Ireland has hitherto, whatever she may hereafter do, *paid nothing* except the poor-rate, which was £390,000 last year" (1846), being not 5d. in the pound on the rental of the country, while in England the average was 1s. 8d![1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 323, 327; Ann. Reg. 1847, 90, 92.

71. Causes which led to the approach of a monetary crisis.

But whatever pains Government might take to convince the house and the country that all was safe; that the nation had learned wisdom by experience; and that, under a wise system of currency-laws, no danger of a monetary crisis was hereafter to be apprehended,—they

* The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave some interesting details on the increased importation of some of the chief articles of consumption between 1843 and 1846, under the combined influence of reduced duties and the railway expenditure:—

	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.
Coffee—lb.,	30,031,422	31,391,297	34,318,095	36,781,391
Butter—cwt.,	148,295	180,965	240,118	255,130
Cheese—cwt.,	166,563	212,206	258,246	327,490
Currants—cwt.,	254,727	285,116	309,799	359,315
Sugar—cwt.,	4,037,921	4,139,983	4,180,606	5,231,848
Tea—lb.,	40,304,407	41,269,351	44,183,135	46,728,208

—*Parl. Deb.* xc. 335, 336.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

were soon taught by woeful experience that these hopes were altogether fallacious, and that a commercial storm of the most violent kind was not only rapidly approaching, but was already on them. The causes of this were twofold, and what is very singular, they arose partly from the prosperity on which Ministers justly prided themselves, and partly from the disaster against which they were making such extensive provision. The great increase of imports, which had advanced from £64,000,000 in 1841 to £93,500,000 in 1848, had not been attended by any proportional augmentation of exports, which had only increased, during the same period, from £51,000,000 in the former year to £52,849,000 in the latter.* Thus the foreign commerce of the nation had run into a heavy balance of imports over exports, which had latterly come to be from £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 a-year. This balance, of course, required to be paid in cash; and though the drain might for a time be averted, or rather postponed, by bill transactions, yet in the end it inevitably fell upon its metallic treasures, and produced a serious chasm in the bullion of the Bank of England,†

* EXPORTS AND IMPORTS FROM 1841 TO 1849.

Years.	Imports.	Exports.	Balance against the Country.
1841, . . .	£64,377,962	£51,634,623	£12,743,339
1842, . . .	65,204,729	47,381,023	17,823,706
1843, . . .	70,093,353	52,278,449	17,814,904
1844, . . .	85,441,555	58,584,292	26,856,263
1845, . . .	85,281,958	60,111,681	25,190,877
1846, . . .	75,953,875	57,786,875	18,177,000
1847, . . .	90,921,866	58,842,377	32,078,489
1848, . . .	93,574,607	52,849,445	40,725,162
1849, . . .	105,874,607	63,596,025	42,278,582

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 356.

† BULLION IN THE BANK OF ENGLAND IN BOTH DEPARTMENTS.

	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.
January,	£15,200,000	£14,700,000	£13,200,000	£14,800,000
June,	15,900,000	16,500,000	14,900,000	10,200,000
On April 24, 1847, ...				9,200,000
On October 24, 1847, ...				8,300,000

—TOOKE *On Prices*, iv. 444, 446.

which had sunk from £16,500,000 in June 1845, to £14,800,000 in the beginning of 1847, and £9,200,000 on the 24th April of that year, and in the October following it fell to £8,300,000.

72. Great effect of the Irish famine.

This immense balance of imports over exports always must, in a great commercial country, arise under a Free-trade system, after a few years of more than ordinary activity and prosperity, for this plain reason, that the rich and old State can consume much more of the rude produce of the poorer one, from whom it is derived, than they, from their poverty, can take off of its manufactured productions. But, without doubt, this natural tendency was much aggravated in this particular case by the Irish famine, which occasioned so prodigious an importation of foreign grain, both in the years when it occurred, and those which immediately followed. The imports of foreign grain into Great Britain and Ireland, which in 1843 had been only 1,370,000 quarters, rose in 1847 to the enormous amount of 11,900,000 quarters, of which no less than 4,460,000 was of wheat and wheat-flour, and this high rate has not yet been diminished in any material degree.* The cost of the importations from June 30, 1846, to November 30, 1847, was £33,000,000; and as the greater part of this large sum required to be paid in specie,[1] because it came from nations which would take nothing else, it is easy to see to what cause this

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 274.

* Imports of Wheat, Wheat-Flour, and other Grains, into the United Kingdom from 1843 to 1850.

Years.	Wheat and Wheat-Flour. Qrs.	Other Grains. Qrs.	Total.
1843,	1,060,000	370,000	1,430,000
1844,	1,380,000	1,650,000	3,030,000
1845,	1,140,000	1,290,000	2,430,000
1846,	2,340,000	2,410,000	4,750,000
1847,	4,460,000	7,450,000	11,910,000
1848,	3,080,000	4,440,000	7,520,000
1849,	4,800,000	5,860,000	10,660,000
1850,	4,830,000	4,190,000	9,020,000

—Tooke and Newmarsh, vi. 461, 462.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

extraordinary drain upon the Bank of England, and the severity of the monetary crisis during the last panic months of 1847, is to be ascribed.

73. Progress of the panic.

This drain first became serious in the beginning of April 1847, being the time when the bills drawn to pay for the great importation of grain and flour, in the November and December preceding, became payable; in consequence of which the Bank raised the rate of its discounts to 5 per cent, it having been at 3½ in the beginning of the year. In the course of the year that establishment changed the rate of its discounts *thirteen times;* and on the 5th August it was advanced to 5½, at which rate it continued till 25th October. At this time there was no undue speculation in any department of commerce or manufacture; the drain arose entirely from the immense balance of imports over exports which the Irish famine had so fearfully augmented. The crisis, especially in the end of April, was, however, dreadfully severe; it was afterwards stated in Parliament that the 27th of that month was the most fearful day ever known in the city. Mr Baring mentioned the case of a gentleman who was possessed of £60,000 in silver bullion, who was unable to obtain the slightest advances upon it. The Bank directors, true to the principle of the Act of 1844, resolutely threw out the paper even of the richest and most respectable houses; and every other bank in the country immediately did the same. Mr Langley mentioned in the House of Commons, that in the north of England 25 per cent was given for money. The effects were immediate and decisive. Consols, which had lately been at 93, fell to 85; Exchequer bills, recently at 14 premium, were at 4 discount; mercantile paper even of the very highest class could nowhere be discounted. The panic was universal and unprecedented.[1]

April 8.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 97; Disraeli, 397, 398; Parl. Deb. xcii. 629, 636.

The crisis was unlike any other that had ever occurred, and well illustrated the working of the new law on the subject. There was no over-trading; there was no com-

mercial embarrassment irrespective of the monetary pressure; the credit of the Bank of England was above suspicion; there was no run upon the other banks; capital was abundant, and more than equal, as the events of the following years demonstrated, to all the undertakings which were in hand or in contemplation. There was simply and only a want of currency to make the advances with, because the Bank, restrained by the Act of 1844, could not lend money with a few hundred thousand pounds only in the banking department, though in the other end they had above £8,000,000 in the issue department! But nevertheless the pressure was such, from this cause, that all undertakings of every kind were brought to a stand, the first houses were on the verge of bankruptcy, and society, like a vast machine in which the moving power of steam is suddenly withdrawn, was all at once stopped, and every wheel dependent on its expansion ceased to revolve.[1]

74. Difference between this and former crises.

[1] Mr Baring; Parl. Deb. xcii. 634, 637; Ann. Reg. 1847, 97, 101; Disraeli's Bentinck, 398; Tooke and Newmarsh, iv. 330, 333.

This deplorable state of things excited, as well it might, the utmost solicitude, both in Parliament and among the public, and a very interesting and important debate took place on the subject in the House of Commons on the 10th May. On that occasion it was observed by Lord G. Bentinck and Mr Baring: "The usual rate of discount in London and Liverpool for the best paper, which had only sixty days to run, is 8 per cent; a state of things altogether unprecedented in this country, and which calls for very different plans of relief from the temporary expedients proposed by Government. Wheat had risen that day to 120s. the quarter; the stocks of all kinds of produce, both at home and abroad, are unusually low; the imports of last year were £10,000,000 below those of the preceding; while the export of gold was to an unprecedented extent. The only remedy which Ministers could propose for this long catalogue of disasters, was to put on the bank screw, and thereby force back the gold. But supposing that method of getting back

75. Lord G. Bentinck's and Mr Baring's argument on the subject of the crisis. May 10, 1847.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

specie to be effectual in attaining the desired end, how does it effect it? Why, by palsying all mercantile operations, stopping the orders for grain, provisions, and cotton when on the verge of famine, and starving the country from one end to the other, both in the means of subsistence and the materials for industry. Surely there must be something wrong in a monetary system which can only secure the retention of gold by such desperate and suicidal measures.

76. Continued.

"The case of the country is such as to require prompt and immediate remedies. We are brought to a deadlock for want of money, while the credit of the Bank is yet good, and it has still £9,000,000 in its coffers, which the Bank Act forbids it to touch. Ought we not, then, to remove those restrictions on our currency, which keep us in a manner starving in the midst of plenty, and are ruining the trade and credit of the country, and starving the people, in order to feed with gold that idol of some parties, the Bank Charter Act? It has already become apparent that free trade and a restricted currency cannot work together; and since we have made our election to have the first, let us lose no time in repealing the last. We have seen the ruinous consequences of leaving the people to supply themselves, and trusting to the dogma that industry will right itself. There is now only alarm and panic in this country, but in a few weeks it may turn into a sad reality; for under the present system we are every day getting nearer a still more fearful state of things, the effects of which may be so disastrous that nothing like it has been experienced in Europe. How is such a calamity to be averted? Experience tells us how this is to be done in the clearest manner. In 1793 our trade was in difficulties; Mr Pitt at once relieved it by an issue of £5,000,000 to the mercantile interest. In 1816, when there were two thousand bankruptcies within the year, Government postponed for three years the resumption of cash payments, which was equivalent

to a large supply of notes to the money market, and the country immediately revived and enjoyed prosperity till 1819, when cash payments were resumed, and immediately the most fearful distress followed. From this the country was rescued by an issue in 1822 of £1 and £2 notes, and an obligation to allow them to circulate for ten years. Then came the terrible crisis of 1825-26, when the country was within twenty-four hours of barter: the crisis was stopped, not by any supply of gold, but by the accidental discovery of one million £1 notes in an old box in the vaults of the Bank of England, the issue of which immediately satisfied the wants of the country. Resting on these precedents, I think myself justified in calling on the house to set the Bank of England free, and restore confidence to the mercantile world. I would apply to the Bank Charter Act, which had not produced any good fruit, the language which had been applied to the barren fig-tree: 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'

" There is at present, and has been for ten days, a total want of the means of obtaining accommodation by the most solvent houses upon undoubted security, and that because the Bank of England by its charter is unable to afford it. I know an instance where it was found impossible to raise a penny upon £60,000 worth of silver, a precious metal which is a legal tender in most parts of the civilised world. It was not a question of price with the Bank, but a question affecting its own safety. The Bank could only issue notes on silver to the extent of one-fifth of the bullion in the Bank; and that they had not, so they could not purchase the silver. When we come to a drain of gold to meet an unavoidable want, there must be some means of avoiding measures by which the commerce of the country will be dislocated. That commerce is carried on almost entirely on a system of credit. If you drive it to a ready-money system, you at once paralyse it in the manufacturing districts. What is required is to give facilities for exports,

77. Continued.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

in order to be able to pay for the corn which we must import in manufactured goods instead of bullion. But the houses in Manchester cannot carry on their trade on four months' bills, which are valueless, as they now are, when they take them for discount into Lombard Street. How can the mercantile interest carry on the export trade, which must be conducted on credit, when all accommodation was refused them? The country has exported perhaps £700,000 of gold, and the effect of this export has been to destroy property to the extent of £100,000,000! Is there any necessary connection, or any connection other than that founded on arbitrary regulation, between these two things? Foreign countries will take gold to any extent at once, but manufactures they will only take as they want them, which is during a course of years. Therefore you must give them time for the demand to grow up, and the supply to be furnished. But how is either to arise, when a system is pursued in this country which is bringing all our manufactures to a state of bankruptcy? *

78. Concluded.

"It is in vain to ascribe our present difficulties either to the extent of railway enterprise, or the imprudent conduct of the Bank of England. Where were the difficulties arising from railways in August last, when the Bank was discounting bills at 2½ per cent, though bills involving an expenditure of £120,000,000 had passed Parliament? The true cause of the present embarrassment is the vast exportation of gold which has taken place, partly to purchase grain, partly to pay for the balance of unrestricted imports. It is the Bank Act which is grinding the trade and commerce of the country, by forcing the bank directors to contract their issues, against their wish, and against the evident interests of the country, whenever an adverse state of the exchange drives gold out of the country. It has been said that 'corporations have no souls;' but if it is so, I am sure that cabinets have no hearts. What can be so

* The preceding paragraph is taken from Mr Baring's speech.—*Parl. Deb.* xcii. 635, 636.

monstrous as to make the credit, enterprise, and industry of a country teeming with all the three, stagnate and go to ruin merely because the Bank cannot retain in their coffers gold, the most mercurial and evanescent of earthly things? It can be no more right that the Bank of England should be tied down beforehand to a particular amount of issues, under various circumstances, than it would be right to pass a law obliging ships in all weathers to carry either studding-sails or foresails. By this law we are put in the extraordinary position, that though trade is in danger of being destroyed for want of the assistance of the Bank, and the Bank is both most willing and able to give that assistance, she is shackled and prevented from doing so by the operation of this law. It is just as if, when one strong man was standing on the bank of a river in which another was drowning, the law were to step in and bind the willing and ready arms of him on the bank, so as to make it impossible to save the other who was drowning."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xcii. 618, 634; Ann. Reg. 1847, 99, 101.

79. Answer of the Government and Sir R. Peel.

On the other hand it was argued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Cardwell) and Sir R. Peel: "We must take care lest, in seeking relief from the repeal of the Act of 1844, we incur the risk of aggravating incalculably the present difficulties of the country. We are now suffering from an unexpected deficiency of food, from a spirit of speculation which had run riot in 1845, and from an extraordinary failure of the cotton crop, which has increased to an unprecedented degree the price of the raw material of one of the staple manufactures of the country. There is no country exposed to the triple pressure of three such causes which would not feel it most severely, no matter what modification may be made in the charter of the Bank, or what amount of £1 notes it might have in circulation. Are the gentlemen who urge such measures aware of the state of the law which would be restored if the Bank Charter were repealed? Are they prepared to let in again the law by which all country banks were at liberty to issue notes to any extent, and the Bank of

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

England might do the same on its own responsibility, and without reference to the state of the exchanges? In that case, what security will exist against a recurrence of the disorders of 1838 and 1839? The main object of the Act of 1844 was to prevent these disorders, and it proposed to do this by rendering perpetual the convertibility of paper into gold. This must at all times limit the circulation, because the consciousness of the impending necessity to pay in gold will check imprudent advances. On the other hand, this risk will be instantly augmented by an issue of inconvertible paper to any amount, because the immediate effect of that will be to open the way to fresh speculations and undertakings, which can end in nothing but an increased run on the Bank for gold.

80. Continued.

"The slightest consideration of the causes which, independent of the Act of 1844, have been acting, not only upon this country, but on the whole civilised world, must convince us that it is in them, and not in the operation of that Act, that the real cause of the distress under which the country is now labouring is to be found. We have it on official authority that the destruction of the potatoes and cereal crops in Ireland alone has been to the extent of £16,000,000. It is difficult to over-estimate the effect of such a sudden abstraction of capital, especially when it is caused by such a calamity as a scarcity of food. Nor has the calamity been confined to this country. Scotland, France, Belgium, Holland, have also in some degree suffered under it, and the countries on the banks of the Rhine are sustaining extreme pressure in consequence. All these countries are looking to the United States as the only source from whence food is to be derived. What effect must not that have had in paralysing our trade, in deranging our ordinary commercial speculations, and depriving us of the usual markets for our manufactures? Mr Baring has said that there never was a year when speculation ran riot as it did in 1845. Well, if men will speculate and run riot, depend upon it, whatever legislative

measures you may pass respecting the currency, they will inevitably suffer from the consequences of their actions. Thus, in addition to the failure of food, you have speculation running riot, and such an investment in railways that, in the course of last year, applications were made to Parliament which, if all acceded to, would have required £340,000,000 to meet the undertaken engagements. In addition to all this, there was a very great failure of the cotton crop, which has enhanced enormously the price of the raw material of the great staple of our manufacture. How absurd, then, to charge the effects of these great and manifold calamities against the Bank Charter Act!

"Are those who are now so ready to throw the blame of every disaster on the Bank Charter Act aware that, in 1814, 1815, and 1816, when we had an inconvertible paper currency, 240 private banks failed? Recollect what took place in 1839, when the Bank had the power of issuing notes irrespective of the exchanges. Why, the Bank was then reduced to £1,600,000 in gold, and there was every prospect of its being unable to fulfil its engagements. Always bear in mind what was the object of the Act of 1844. The main object of that Act was to insure the convertibility of paper into gold, and to prevent, in times of difficulty and distress, the temptation to which it is so easy to yield, of giving accommodation by issuing paper without reference to the exchanges, and thereby purchasing temporary ease by afterwards aggravating the commercial pressure by a panic which leads to a demand for gold in exchange for paper. It is of the utmost importance that, in those periods of commercial difficulty, we should not be exposed to that other difficulty which so much aggravates the first—a run upon the Bank, in consequence of doubts of its ability to pay its notes in gold. What would be the state of affairs now, if, in addition to the state of things so strongly dwelt on on the other side, we had a pressure on the Bank for gold? What would have been the state

81. Continued.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

of things if the Act of 1844 had not been passed? Suppose there had been on the part of every country bank, while this riotous speculation in railways existed, a power of fostering it by uncontrolled issues of paper. Would the state of affairs have been as advantageous as it is? Severe as I admit the pressure to be, and deeply as I regret it, yet can any man deny that the Act of 1844, controlling the issues by country banks in a time of rash speculation, affords security for ultimate solvency? Would not speculation without that check, even now admitted to have run riot, have precipitated us to the verge of ruin?

82. Concluded.

"It is said the Government should possess a dispensing power to authorise the Bank, under extraordinary circumstances, to increase their issues. We were decidedly of opinion, when the Bank Charter Act was passed, it should possess no such power. The whole objects of the Act would have been frustrated if it was known that such a dispensing power existed in any quarter. If any functionaries—as the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—possessed any such power, application would be made to them from all quarters calling on them to exercise it, the precaution which individuals ought to take would be neglected, and every mere temporary pressure would be declared irremediable otherwise than by the exercise of the power so possessed by the Government. We were well aware of the memorial of the London bankers, which recommended the adoption of such a discretionary power by the Government; but we declined to embrace it, being desirous to leave the responsibility of its banking operations to the bank directors, and to control them absolutely, as we have done, only in the issue department. If I thought that any relief would be afforded to the country by a relaxation of the Bank Charter Act, no pedantic adherence to formerly expressed opinions would prevent me from recommending it. But as it is my firm belief, founded on the information at present

in my possession, that any relaxation of the Act authorising the issue of £2,000,000 of notes on Exchequer bills would only aggravate the evil, and purchase present relief by future suffering, I feel it my duty to give it my most decided opposition. Depend upon it, if you attempt to purchase present relief by endangering the convertibility of paper, you will inflict a severe blow on the prosperity of the country—you will shake all confidence in the medium of exchange, and depreciate the value of property of every description."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xcii. 658, 690; Ann. Reg. 1847, 103, 105.

83. Nothing followed on this debate.

No resolution of the house followed on this debate, as, in truth, a motion of a mere formal nature was alone before it when it took place. The decided opinion, however, expressed by Ministers and Sir R. Peel against any modification of the Bank Act had a great effect, and encouraged the directors of the Bank in that steady refusal of accommodation which, while it averted the danger from themselves, did so only by spreading it fearfully throughout the community. Some gold arrivals, however, came opportunely at this time, which postponed the risk; and the Bank directors, encouraged by this circumstance, at the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, considerably augmented their discounts, which had the effect of materially relieving, in the mean time, the pressure on the money market, and postponing, till the end of autumn, the catastrophe which was approaching.

84. Reflections on it.

This debate, however, is highly interesting, not merely as containing an admirable summary of all that either was or could be advanced on either side of this all-important subject, but as evincing a striking instance of the rhetorical skill of the very eminent statesman who took so prominent a part in defence of the Bank Charter Act. It is not easy to say which is most to be admired—the cogency of the arguments adduced on his own side of the question, or the skill with which he evaded every consideration which tended to the other side. Sir R. Peel observed, with truth, that one cause of the monetary crisis

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

of 1847 was the country having "run riot" in 1845 with railway speculations; but he forgot to add, what was equally true, that that very "running riot" had been induced by his own measure in reducing the deposits on railway shares from 10 to 5 per cent, and the effect of the Bank Act itself, which immediately threw down the rate of discount from 4 to 2½ per cent. He dwelt with justice and force on the aggravation which the railway mania would have received from an unlimited issue of notes by irresponsible country bankers when it was going on; but he seemed to be insensible to the far more serious aggravation which it had received from that Act, which compelled the Bank to purchase every ounce of gold brought to its doors, and thus rendered inevitable the efflux of notes, whether required or not, simultaneously with the influx of foreign treasure. He dwelt on the vehement excitement and excessive undertakings of the last three years; forgetting that this excitement, and the demand for labour consequent on it, had been the subject of constant and just self-congratulation by him when it was going on, and was ascribed by him entirely to his own Free-trade measures. He described, with force and justice, the grievous nature of the deficiency of £16,000,000 in agricultural produce, which had arisen from the potato rot in Ireland, and the necessary derangement of the currency which resulted from the purchase of so large a part of the national subsistence with gold; forgetting that this casual and passing calamity was what his Free-trade measures had rendered the chronic and settled malady of the country. He dwelt on the inconveniences arising from the high price of cotton, in consequence of a shortcoming of the crop in 1846;* forgetting how much the effects of that scarcity had been

* Cotton Wool imported from America.

Years.	lb.	Years.	lb.
1841, . .	358,240,000	1845, . .	626,650,000
1842, . .	414,030,000	1846, . .	372,401,949
1843, . .	574,738,000	1847, . .	364,599,000
1844, . .	517,218,000	—Porter's *Parl. Tables*, 1841-50, 170.	

aggravated by the Free-trade measures which had rendered the importation of that article so immense in the two preceding years.

85. Debate on the Navigation Laws.

The crisis having by these means been postponed, Parliament had leisure to attend to various matters of lesser but still great importance. The first of these was the Navigation Laws, which were violently assailed by the Liberal party, with Mr Ricardo at their head, as prejudicial to British shipping, and in an especial manner inconsistent with the spirit of the Free-trade principles and cheapening system which had recently been introduced. The motion for a committee was strongly opposed by Mr Liddell, who contended that the Navigation Laws were the main stay of our commercial superiority, and the only secure bulwark of our national independence. The motion was supported by Sir R. Peel, and carried by a majority of 155 to 61—an ominous division, and which first rung the knell of that shipping system which Sir R. Peel admitted to have been "much older than the Protectorate, and almost simultaneous in origin with the military and commercial marine of the country."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 1058; Ann. Reg. 1847, 105, 107.

86. Mr Fielden's bill to limit factory labour. Feb. 6.

Inferior in general importance to the vast question of the Navigation Laws, another of still more pressing interest to a large and interesting portion of the community was happily brought to a close during this session of Parliament. The FACTORY QUESTION, involving as it did the number of hours when operatives, and especially children, were to be employed in manufactories, had been long and warmly agitated in the country; but the extreme anxiety which it excited on both sides, and the great interest at stake in the issue, had hitherto prevented any satisfactory arrangement being effected on the subject. Mr Fielden, however, brought the matter to an issue by a motion, brought forward on the 6th February, which was to the effect, that "the labour of young persons between the ages of thirteen and eighteen be limited to twelve hours a-day, allowing two hours out of the twelve for

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

meals—that is, to ten hours per day of actual work, for five days in the week, and eight hours on Saturdays. This alteration to be carried out by restricting the hours of actual labour to sixty-three hours in the week until May 1, 1848, and after that to fifty-eight hours; and that these restrictions shall apply to females above eighteen years of age."—"I ask for this change," said Mr Fielden, "because the people employed in factories have long wished for it, and have long petitioned the legislature to concede it to them, and because the ministers of religion, medical practitioners, and, indeed, all classes who have opportunities of observing the consequences of the present system, deprecate it as destructive of the moral and physical condition of a vast and most important class in the community. It is a question which involves the very existence of thousands, who are, I am afraid, annually sacrificed for the want of those due and sufficient regulations, without which, the late Sir Robert Peel asserted, an improved machinery would become our bitterest curse."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 487, 489; Ann. Reg. 1847, 110. 111.

87. Continued.

In support of this motion Mr Fielden quoted several most important facts, disclosed in the Registrar-General's Reports, bearing with decisive force on the present question. "The population of the extra-metropolitan districts of Surrey was, in 1841, 187,868; and the population of the town sub-districts of Manchester was 163, 856; and yet in Manchester, with less population, the deaths registered in seven years (1838-44) were 39,922, and those in Surrey only 22,777, making a difference of 16,165. The population of Surrey exceeded that of Manchester, yet in seven years 16,000 persons died in Manchester over and above the deaths in Surrey. The difference between the mortality of young children in the two districts is still from alarming. There were, in 1844, 23,523 children under five years of age in Surrey, and the deaths of children of that age in the same period were 7364; *the children in Manchester were in the same year* 21,152; *the deaths,*

20,726. In the seven years, 13,362 children in Manchester alone fell a sacrifice to known causes, which, it is believed, may be removed to a great extent; and the victims in Liverpool were not less numerous. Other parts, and particularly the towns of England, are similarly affected." The Registrar-General adds: "The returns of the first quarter prove that nothing effectual has been done to put a stop to the disease, suffering, and death by which so many thousands perish. Thousands of the men and women themselves perish of the diseases formerly so fatal, for the same reasons, in barracks, camps, jails, and ships. Children suffer from every kind of neglect while the mother is employed in factory labour, while their health is undermined by the use of opiates and by the ill-kept state of their homes. These results exceed the horrors of war, and cannot be justified on any assumed plea of necessity."

"In May last, when the subject was under discussion, Mr Cobden said, that, if the measure were put off for a year, the feelings of the working classes on the subject would change. The measure has been put off for a year; but the only effect of that delay has been, not a weakening, but a strengthening of their convictions on the subject. The only argument adduced on the subject is the 'tyrant's plea'—the plea of necessity. But even that plea fails here: nay, it is rolled over to the other side. The only effect of working the factory girls and women to death, is over-production, which speedily necessitates a diminution of supply to arrest the fall of prices; and thus the pendulum oscillates between over-labour and under-time. All the mills at Manchester are now at short time—some six, some eight, some ten hours. Would this have been the case if a uniform ten-hours bill had been introduced last session? You have limited the labour of the slaves in the West Indies to forty-five hours a-week; can you refuse to restrain that of your own female operatives to fifty-eight hours—that is, thirteen

88. Concluded.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

hours more? Is the white slave, toiling in rooms at 80° of Fahrenheit, less our object of pity, or less entitled to protection, than the black slave, working in the open air under a similar temperature? It is in vain to allege, that the market for the produce of our factories will be injured if this bill passes. The same thing was said when the agitation first began in 1815, at which time the children were working from twelve to fourteen hours a-day. It was said, 'We shall be ruined if you prevent the children working fourteen hours a-day.' Well, the thing was done; the working hours were reduced from seventy-nine hours a-week to sixty-nine hours for adults, working young persons in the night was prohibited, and young children were not allowed to work more than six hours a-day. And yet the cotton trade, so far from being thereby injured, has enormously increased, and 25,000,000 pounds more of cotton yarn were exported last year than in any previous year. After such an example, it is idle to speak of the present bill as having any tendency to lessen the market for our cotton manufactures." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 489, 491—xc. 770; Ann. Reg. 1847, 114, 117.

89. Answer of Sir R. Peel, Sir James Graham, and Mr Cobden.

Government was at first undecided what course to follow on the subject; but at length, on the second reading, Lord John Russell gave the bill his support, although the Cabinet were divided upon the subject. From the first, however, it was vigorously opposed by Sir R. Peel, Sir James Graham, Mr Hume, and the whole Free-trade and cheapening party in both houses. It was argued by them: "The opponents of the bill are the true friends of labour. If you diminish the hours of labour, you increase the cost of production. This additional expense must either increase the price of the article, or it must form a deduction from the profits of the manufacturer or the wages of the workmen, or be divided between them. This argument has never yet been met, and if foreign competition is as formidable as is supposed, the effect of the change will be to drive us from the foreign markets. The bill will affect the four

staple articles of manufacture—cotton, woollen, linen, and silk. These four articles comprise £37,000,000 out of the £51,000,000 of our exports. The price of food is now higher than it has been for several years; and at such a time it is proposed, for the first time in the history of our manufactures, to limit the running of machinery in these four branches. That the cutting off of two hours' work in a day will augment the cost of production, if it is not compensated by a reduction in the wages of labour, is self-evident; and is this a time, when provisions are so high, and distress everywhere staring us in the face, to introduce a measure which, if it does not drive us from the foreign market, will undoubtedly have that effect?

90. Continued.

"What are the three securities for the present prosperity of our manufactures? They are our capital, our machinery, our labour. Now, we are every day exporting our machinery; there is nothing to prevent increased investment of our capital in foreign countries; the increased facilities of locomotion and communication enable the working man to seek employment at pleasure abroad. It is under such circumstances that it is now proposed to restrict, nominally, the labour of women and children, but practically that of adult men, for they cannot work without them. Labour is to be restricted to five days out of six. Such a change appears in the highest degree dangerous. If it passes into law, you will lower the wages, and abridge the comforts of the working men, at the very time when you are making every exertion to increase their intellectual cultivation. If you do this, their enlarged information will only become a source of danger to themselves and the State. We should all work to this one point, whether by sanitary improvements or otherwise, to elevate the character, brighten the prospects, and enlarge the comforts of the working classes: the future peace, prosperity, and happiness of the country are indissolubly wound up with such measures. But how

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

are we to do this if we curtail their wages? and what is a reduction of the hours of labour by a sixth in a week, but an income-tax to that extent laid exclusively upon the working classes? Rather let us allow them to continue as they now are, and by honest industry lay the foundation, like the honourable member for Salford (Mr Brotherton), of a fortune which hundreds have acquired." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 774, 814; Ann. Reg. 1847, 116, 118.

91. The bill passes both houses.

Plausible as these arguments were, they did not prevail with either house of Parliament. The bill passed the House of Commons by a majority of 104 to 46 : the Peers, by 53 to 11. It was evident from these figures that some great change had taken place from former years, when the bill had been rejected in the Commons, first by a majority of 138, then by one of 10. Nor was it difficult to see what this change was. In the interim the Corn Laws had been repealed, and the county members were now determined to retaliate on the mill-owners. The whole Protectionists in both houses voted for the bill. Lord Brougham, who strongly opposed it in the House of Peers, ridiculed the idea of its having a tendency to afford the working classes leisure for mental improvement. "After ten hours' work," said he, "a man is too tired to read : if the Saturday is taken as a holiday, it will be spent in the public-house. I have been trying to educate the peasantry these twenty-five years, and *the competitor and antagonist by which I have always been defeated is Sleep.*" [2]

[2] Parl. Deb. xc. 889, 891; Ann. Reg. 1847, 119, 121.

92. Reflections on this measure.

Notwithstanding this sweeping and characteristic denunciation of sleep by the learned lord, there can now be no doubt that the measure was a wise and judicious one, and that the philanthropic men who had so long and so strenuously laboured for its support—Lord Ashley,* Mr Fielden, Mr Brotherton, and Mr Oastler—are to be regarded as the permanent benefactors of mankind.

* Now the Earl of Shaftesbury.

Experience has now demonstrated this in the most unequivocal manner; it has declared in favour of the Ten Hours Bill as clearly as it has against instant negro emancipation. So far from the cotton manufacture having been injured by this abridgment of the hours of labour, its progress since the change has been unexampled: considerably greater than it was before the alteration took place.* Nor is it difficult to see how this effect has taken place, and how so great a boon as the cutting off a sixth from the hours of weekly labour has been conferred on the working classes without any diminution in the amount of the national production. The steam-engine has done the whole. It has compensated, and more than compensated, this diminution in human toil by the increased power of machinery. The working classes have gained two hours more a-day of nature's best friend—sleep, and the national industry has not been in the slightest degree injured. Since the Ten Hours Bill was passed, so unanimously petitioned for by the working classes, the agitation on this subject has entirely ceased; a clear proof that the remedy introduced had hit the proper medium between over-exertion on the one hand and over-relaxation on the other. And of the necessity of legislative interference on the subject no better proof can be afforded than the fact, unhappily too well known to all who are conversant with the subject, that the young women and children, whom the bill was principally intended to protect, were not in reality free agents, and that the tyranny

* British Cotton Manufactures Exported.

Years.	Declared Value.	Years.	Declared Value.
1840, . .	£24,668,000	1849, . .	£26,771,000
1841, . .	23,499,000	1850, . .	28,257,401
1842, . .	21,647,000	1851, . .	30,088,836
1843, . .	23,447,000	1852, . .	29,877,087
1844, . .	25,805,348	1853, . .	32,712,902
1845, . .	26,119,331	1854, . .	31,645,850
1846, . .	25,599,826	1855, . .	34,811,706
1847, . .	23,333,225	1856, . .	38,284,760
1848, . .	22,681,000		

—Porter, 178; and *Statistical Abstract of United Kingdom*, No. IV., p. 21.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

against which law was required to protect them *was that of their own parents.* Incredible as it may appear, it was proved in evidence before the parliamentary committee on the subject, that at the age of six years a child can be profitably employed in factories; and instances were not wanting, before law interposed on the subject, of *parents' bread having been earned by children only three years of age.**

93. Vast difference in the mortality of manufacturing towns and the country.

But while every friend of humanity must rejoice at this great step having been gained in behalf of the working classes, yet it must not be supposed that it removed either the whole or the most serious part of the evils under which they labour in great towns. On the contrary, though it has doubtless lessened one great cause of suffering in them, others not less formidable remain behind, and exercise an important influence on the happiness and increase of the human species in the later stages of every opulent and commercial society. The delusion so stoutly maintained and so steadily adhered to by the commercial party, that population increases faster in great towns and manufacturing districts than rural, has been now completely demolished by what the *Times* calls "the unpitiable logic of the Registrar-General." There is, indeed, in the former a greater number of marriages in proportion to the population than in the latter, and those marriages are more prolific. Nature, it would appear, strives to maintain her ground amidst the numerous difficulties with which she is there surrounded; and the higher rate of wages insures a constant influx of young persons of both sexes, for the most part in the prime of life, into those great hives of industry. Thus, there is

* "It has been ascertained that children *as young as three years of age* labour for their own bread and the bread of their parents. What does the State do on these occasions? It only says to the master, You shall not employ a child in a factory, working, as some are doing now, from five in the morning till seven at night, till it is *eight years* of age."—MR ROEBUCK, on 21st April 1843, quoted in *Parl. Deb.* xc. 771.

generally a rapid increase of numbers for a considerable period in such localities. But it is entirely derived from extraneous sources. Such is the mortality in great towns and manufacturing districts, that no amount of general prosperity, or early marriages, can enable them unaided to maintain their own numbers. While the annual proportion of deaths in agricultural districts in Scotland is from 100 to 107 out of 10,000 in the rural counties, in Lanarkshire, which is at once mining and manufacturing, it is 268. The proportion of deaths of children under five years of age, in the agricultural counties, is 29 per cent of the whole; the average of eight great towns is 49 per cent, and in Glasgow it is generally as high as 57, sometimes 61. The general mortality of 133 town districts in Scotland, in 1855, was 261 in 10,000, or 1 in 38; in 94 rural districts it was 169, or 1 in 28. From a very curious table,* compiled by the Registrar of England, it appears that the chances of life are invariably in inverse proportion to the density of the inhabitants, despite all the superior medical advantages of such as dwell in cities and crowded localities.[1] It is to

[1] Registrar's Report, Scotland, 1855-56; Registrar-General's Report, 1853; England—Introduction, xi.

* If the area of England is grouped in districts, in proportion to the density of the inhabitants, as measured by the respective proportion of the inhabitants to the square yards of the districts in which they dwell, the following curious and startling result is arrived at:—

Persons to a square mile.	Proximity of person to person. Yards.	Annual deaths to 1000 living.	Persons to a square mile.	Proximity of person to person. Yards.	Annual deaths to 1000 living.
56	252	15	324	105	22
106	184	16	485	86	23
144	158	17	1216	54	24
149	155	18	1262	53	25
182	140	19	2064	42	26
202	133	20	2784	45	27
220	128	21	4134	28	28 to 36

—*Registrar-General's Report*, 1853, p. xvi.—Introduction.

It is chiefly the immense mortality in crowded situations, of children under five years of age, which occasions this extraordinary difference. The propor-

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

be hoped sanitary improvements, increased temperance, and comfort in living and other causes, may in time lessen this great disproportion. But there seems no reason to suppose it will ever be entirely removed; and it would appear to be a great law of Nature, intended to prevent the undue aggregation of mankind in particular localities, and insure the dispersion and general progress of the species.

94. Introduction of a system of limited service.

The system of recruiting for the army underwent a great change in this year, in consequence of a measure introduced by Government, and which received the sanction of both houses of Parliament. Hitherto, notwithstanding several attempts to introduce an opposite system, recruiting had been chiefly for life. On 22d March, Mr Fox Maule (now Lord Panmure), the Secretary at War, introduced a bill, the purport of which was to limit the term of enlistment in the infantry to ten years, and in the cavalry, artillery, and engineers, to twelve. After the expiration of these respective periods, the man, if in

tion of deaths, per cent, of children under five years of age, in the eight principal towns of Scotland in March 1857, was as follows:—

	Population in 1857. Estimated.	Deaths.	Proportion, per cent, under 5 years.
Perth,	27,619	64	39
Leith,	35,807	69	45
Greenock,	37,724	110	36
Paisley,	48,269	116	47
Aberdeen,	78,933	163	31
Dundee,	90,731	188	40
Edinburgh,	177,260	348	29
Glasgow,	374,505	1,120	56

—*Scottish Registrar's Report*, March 1857.

The deaths in England, in 1853, were 421,097, which is at the rate of 22.88 to 100 living. The proportion, per cent, of the deaths under five years of age to 100 living was, in 1853, as follows:—

Ages.	
2	7.346
5	7.847

Under five years, 15.193 for 100 living.

—*Registrar-General's Report*, 1853, xii.—Introduction.

actual service, might be detained for two years longer; and it was to be in his option to enlist again, with the benefit of his former service, for eleven years in the infantry, or twelve in the cavalry or artillery. After ten years' service, the soldier might enrol himself for a deferred pension, in which case he would be liable to serve twelve days in the year, and after serving twenty-two years in that capacity, he would become entitled to a pension of 6d. a-day in the same way as by eleven years of active service. The pensioners were stated by him to amount to thirteen thousand, and for all purposes, when great exertions were not required, were as fit for duty as when they fired their muskets at Waterloo.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xci. 274, 280; Ann. Reg. 123, 125.

95. Which passes into law.

The bill was strongly supported in both houses by the members of the Government and several officers of the army, particularly Sir De Lacy Evans and Major Layard, as tending to introduce a superior body of men into the service, and remove the objection that a man who enlisted lost his freedom, and became a serf for life. It was as strenuously opposed by Lord Londonderry, Sir Howard Douglas, and several other experienced officers, upon the ground that it would banish the old soldiers who formed the bone and muscle of the army, and lead to a constant influx of new and inexperienced soldiers into the ranks. So strongly were these apprehensions expressed, that even the veteran reformer, Lord Brougham, admitted that he shared them, and contemplated with dismay the thoughts of "touching so noble and perfect a machine as the British army." The Duke of Wellington, however, cast the balance in favour of the measure, by the observation, which experience has abundantly proved to be well founded, that after a man has been ten years in the army, he has become so habituated to military life that he is incapable of taking to any other; and thus, that nearly all the soldiers who were worth keeping would enlist anew, for the entire term of twenty-one or

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

twenty-four years, after their first term had expired.* In agreeing, however, to the bill on this ground, he concurred in the strongest manner in the statement as to the infinite superiority of old soldiers over young ones, especially in the commencement of real warfare; and his words are alike important as containing the true wisdom on the subject, and as prophetic of the mournful disasters which their oblivion was so soon to bring upon the British nation.[1] †

[1] Parl. Deb. xcii. 1020, 1029; Ann. Reg. 1847, 125, 129.

96. Public education.

Less momentous in its immediate results, but not less so in its ultimate consequences, the important subject of PUBLIC EDUCATION formed the subject of very interesting debates in this session of Parliament. These took place in consequence of the promulgation of certain minutes of the educational committee of the Privy Council, on which Ministers proposed to issue grants of public money for the purposes specified. These were deemed

* This was abundantly proved by a fact mentioned by Earl Grey, in his very able speech introducing the bill into the House of Peers: "In 1829 Lord Hardinge introduced the plan of allowing men a free discharge after sixteen years of service, a period reduced to twelve years by Mr Sydney Herbert in 1845; and from a memorandum in Lord Grey's hands, I find that the number of soldiers who, between 1830 and 1844, under the reduced service, were discharged without any gratuity, *amounted to fifty-three annually in the whole British army*, being less than one man for every two regiments."—*Parl. Deb.* xci. 1334. Lord Grey, on this occasion, mentioned a most gratifying fact in regard to the great diminution of corporal punishments in the army, in consequence of the wise and humane changes introduced in recent times,—that while in 1818, out of 28,900 men in foreign stations, 80 men out of every 1000 underwent corporal punishment; last year, in the same stations, the proportion was only 4 in 1000."—*Parl. Deb.* xci. 1324.

† "I am decidedly of opinion that we should do nothing to deprive the country of the services of the old soldiers; but having maturely considered this bill, I think it will not tend to any diminution of the old soldiers. *Old soldiers, my lords, are, in my opinion, absolutely necessary to the very existence of an army.* Although this country has been under the protection of peace for thirty years and more, I have had under my consideration during that time military operations of great extent and importance, not only in the Mediterranean, but in North and South America, in South Africa, and all over Asia, nearly at the same time; and if you had not had the highest discipline and best troops in the world, it would not have been possible for you to have carried on these operations. Look at China. In that case it was necessary to transport troops from Australia, and land them in China, where they were called on to act on rivers, in creeks, and upon islands, in concert with the ships of her Majesty.

unduly favourable to the Established Church by the Dissenters, and their opposition led to animated debates in both houses of Parliament. In introducing the subject on the part of Government, Lord Lansdowne lamented that the sectarian jealousies between the two great bodies of Churchmen and Dissenters rendered it impossible to bring forward a plan for universal education; but he gave very gratifying information as to what, under the limited system, which alone was practicable, had actually been done since the Government system had been introduced in 1833. From that time to 1846, Parliament had granted £490,000 for the purposes of education; the schoolhouses for which grants had been made would, when completed, accommodate 550,000 scholars, besides 150,000 more in 3500 schools which had invited inspection, without having obtained grants of public money. The chief object of the proposed grants was to extend

They succeeded in effecting all that was expected of them. How was that done? It was done by the discipline of your troops—the discipline maintained by the old soldiers. They were the men who led the young ones, and, acting together, they were able to achieve any conquest. Again, one night during the operations against the Sikhs, a regiment was lying on their arms, and Lord Hardinge was on the ground at their head. The enemy opened fire upon them, and annoyed them very much, in consequence of which my noble friend ordered the men to rise and advance upon the guns. They did so, and the guns were captured. This was at night, remember. I ask, could such a feat have been performed under such circumstances by any but old soldiers? It would have been impossible. Bear in mind the conduct of the Emperor Napoleon with respect to old soldiers; remember the manner in which he employed them. Recollect, too, how they are prized by every power all over the world; and then I will once more entreat your lordships never to consent to any measure which would deprive her Majesty's service of old and experienced men, *and thus pave the way for disasters which would assuredly follow when the army should come to be employed in war*.

"I should be rejoiced if the measure at present under consideration should induce a superior class of men to enter the army; but I confess I very much doubt it. But putting that out of the question, I believe that, looking at all the circumstances of the case, looking at the advantages held out to the soldier in the reward for good conduct, after five, ten, fifteen, and twenty years' service, the army will suffer no injury from the measure, and that the soldiers will re-enlist after the ten years. Therefore it is that I recommend your lordships to try the measure of limited enlistment. It is my firm belief that this measure will make no difference in the number of old soldiers in the army."—*Parl. Deb.* xci. 1338.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

this system of inspection, which, so far as it went, had worked well, and to grant to all the teachers power to select a certain number out of the most promising of their pupils, who were to be trained up, under the name of apprentices, to the duties and practice of education, so as to fit them to become in their turn teachers of others. For each of these apprentices or normal pupils a certain annual allowance was to be provided, and for such as could not find situations in the Government schools, employment was to be given in the revenue departments. Pensions also, after fifteen years of public service, were provided to well-conducted schoolmasters and schoolmistresses. Lord Brougham warmly approved of the proposed measure, regretting at the same time that "no general and comprehensive plan was practicable, because society was divided into two great classes, Churchmen and Dissenters, who loved education much, but controversy more."[1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 1327—xci. 940—lxxxix. 858, 932.

97. New Coercion Bill for Ireland.

Although the ministry of Sir R. Peel had been overthrown by a combination of Whigs and Protectionists on the question of the Coercion and Arms Bill for Ireland, yet experience was not long of proving that the measure, then so unceremoniously rejected, was in itself necessary and expedient, and that without some similar enactment government had become impracticable in the sister island. So threatening did affairs become in some parts of Ireland in the end of 1846, and first months of

* In the debate on this subject in the House of Commons, Mr Macaulay observed on 19th April: "In Hertford House of Correction, out of 700 prisoners, about one-half are unable to read, and only 8 could read and write well. In Maidstone Prison, out of 8000 prisoners, 1300 were unable to read, and only 50 could read well. In Cold-Bath-Fields Prison, out of 8000, not one could read and write well. From the registers of marriages, we find that out of 130,000 couples married in the year 1844, 40,000 bridegrooms and 60,000 brides could only sign by a mark. What does this imply? The most grievous want of education for many of the remainder, who have been unable to sign their names. How many of the day-schools are nothing but a dirty room, with a heap of fuel on one side and a brood of chickens on the other, and the only instruments of education are a dog-eared spelling-book and a broken slate?"—*Parl. Deb.* xci. 1016.

1847, that Ministers were themselves under the necessity of introducing a measure for the repression of crime, which was in effect almost the same as that which had been so recently thrown out in the Lower House; and the facts which Sir George Grey adduced to justify the measure were such as amply proved its necessity. It is remarkable that the increase of crime, which was so alarming, had taken place only in a few counties; over the country generally there not only was no increase of offences, but a marked diminution, notwithstanding the universal distress which prevailed. Sir George Grey mentioned that the number of serious offences during the whole of 1846 had been 2885; whereas, up to the end of October 1847, they did not exceed 1035. But in some districts of the country, particularly Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary, there existed a secret conspiracy, which had spread such intense dismay over the country that it became the absolute duty of Government, at all hazards, to put it down. The present, therefore, is no general indictment against a whole people; it is a measure empowering the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim certain baronies and counties, and the effect of that proclamation was, that the carrying of arms between sunrise and sunset became illegal, and arms could only be kept legally in possession upon a license from Government; and the Lord-Lieutenant was authorised to send down an additional police force from the reserve at Dublin, at the expense, in the first instance, of the public treasury, but ultimately of the disturbed districts.[1]* Sir R. Peel's triumph was now complete, and he put the finishing-stroke to his victory by himself voting, with all his fol-

[1] Parl. Deb. xcv. 270, 273, 922; Ann. Reg. 1847, 236, 237.

* The increase of violent crime, chiefly in Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary, in the first six months of 1846 and 1847, were respectively—

	1846.	1847.
Homicides,	68	96
Firing at the person,	55	126
Robberies of arms,	207	530
Firing into dwellings,	51	116

—*Parl. Deb.*, xcv. 276.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

lowers, for the very bill which had been made the instrument of his own overthrow. So evident had the necessity of the case become, that it passed the Commons by an overwhelming majority, being 296 to 19, or 277, and in the Lords unanimously.

98. Prorogation and dissolution of Parliament.

Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person on the 23d July, and next day dissolved by royal proclamation. The elections were languidly conducted, and excited very little attention. There was neither any great social or national question at stake, nor any keen contest of parties to awaken the dormant energies of their adherents throughout the country. It was universally understood that the Conservatives were, for the time at least, utterly disjointed and broken up, and that any attempt to reconstruct the great body which Sir R. Peel had headed was out of the question. The Liberals were evidently destined for a long time, perhaps for ever, to retain the reins of power; and though the old Whig party was nearly as much displaced from the lead as the Tories were, that did not shake the majority of English borough Liberals, Scotch Radicals, and Irish Catholics, in whom, by the Reform Bill, the government of the empire was now vested. In addition to this, the course of current events had turned men's minds to very different objects. The famine in Ireland had frozen every heart with horror; the monetary crisis in Great Britain threatened every one engaged in trade with ruin; and men, in the utmost state of alarm for their private affairs, had neither money, nor leisure, nor care to bestow on political disputes. From these causes the elections excited very little attention; the old members were in general returned without a contest, and the only difference in the result was an addition to the Liberal ranks, slight indeed, but sufficient to secure them a working majority.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 187, 189.

It was no wonder that the attention of the country was

99. Commercial embarrassments.

fixed on other objects than the hustings, for the appearances in the commercial world had now become threatening in the extreme. The panic, which had been so severe in April, had indeed passed away, chiefly from the announcement received in the beginning of May that the Emperor of Russia was about to invest a portion of his accumulated treasure, amounting to 30,000,000 silver roubles (£4,750,000), in the public funds of France and England. This was the first time that the gold mines of the Ural Mountains, now producing £3,000,000 annually, had been brought on a large scale to bear on the money market of Western Europe, and the effect was very considerable, chiefly by diminishing the terror of an increased demand for gold to pay for the immense importations of food which were still going on. The season also was favourable, and hopes were entertained, which were happily more than realised, of an abundant harvest in autumn. From this cause, joined to the great amount of the imported grain, the prices of food fell considerably in the end of May and beginning of June; but the pressure for money, owing to the combined effect of the immense importations and heavy railway calls, was such that no reduction of the current rate of interest took place, which still remained at 5 per cent.* The sums lent abroad in that year were £33,000,000, and the expenditure on railways £47,000,000.[1]

May 6.

[1] Tooke, iv. 312, 314.

These causes necessarily renewed the pressure, and it became very severe in August, when the rate of discount

* Capital authorised to be raised and expended on Railways.

		Authorised.	Expended.
1845.	First half year,	£59,000,000	£3,500,000
	Second do.		10,600,000
1846.	First do.	124,000,000	9,800,000
	Second do.		26,685,000
1847.	First do.	38,000,000	25,700,000
	Second do.		22,800,000
		£221,000,000	£96,085,000

—Tooke, iv. 314; and v. 311.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

100. Increased monetary pressure in August.

at the Bank rose to 5½, while the Bank reserve sunk to £4,704,000 against £14,000,000 liabilities; and consols, which had stood at 93 in the beginning of the year, fell rapidly to 85. These were sufficiently strong premonitory symptoms, but the Government did not take the alarm, and persisted in the belief that, under the admirably constructed self-balancing system of 1844, the currency would right itself without any serious detriment to the general interests of the community. This idea was increased by the fineness of the season and abundance of the harvest, which was so remarkable that on the suggestion of Government a general thanksgiving was returned to Almighty God for the blessing. But though this lessened a danger of one kind, it induced another hardly less serious, which was the immediate cause of bringing on the catastrophe which was approaching. The fineness of the weather and harvest, coupled with the enormous amount of the importation, which in the harvest year from September 1846 to September 1847 had risen to the unprecedented amount of 11,800,000 quarters, of which 5,000,000 were wheat, occasioned a prodigious fall in the price of grain of every description. Wheat, which in June 1847 had been at 92s. 10d., sunk in August to 66s., and in September was as low as 52s., at which comparatively low figure it stood during the remaining months of the year.* This immense and rapid fall, coming suddenly upon so large a portion of the mercantile capital of the country as was engaged in the grain trade, was attended with the most calamitous results. One after another the greatest houses in the corn trade came down, and with them a whole host of the lesser firms engaged in the same traffic, or involved with them in business. The effect of these failures, of course, was to augment in a most serious degree both the demand for money and the general alarm. Everything tended to the same point, and that was an augmented

* In May the average price of wheat was 102s.; in September it was 48s.—CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER'S Statement, Nov. 29, 1847.—*Parl. Deb.* xcv. 386.

pressure on the Bank for advances which the Bank Charter Act left them absolutely without the means of meeting. Free Trade had landed the country in a balance of imports over exports, requiring for the most part to be paid in gold, which had come now to exceed £40,000,000 a-year; the Irish famine had sent half as much out of the country to buy food; railway undertakings required an expenditure at home of above £40,000,000 a-year, and the great houses which had so largely imported grain were assailed by a fall in the article to little more than a half of its prices three months before. Never was there a time in European history when, from the combination of so many concurring causes, large Bank advances to support credit and carry on undertakings were so loudly called for, and the Bank had ample means to meet them, for they had still £9,000,000 in their coffers. But here the Bank Charter stepped in and locked up £8,000,000 sterling, amidst the universal pressure, in the issue department. Reduced to £1,000,000 in the banking department, the directors were compelled to be extremely cautious, and accordingly on 1st October they intimated that "5½ would be charged on all bills falling due before the 15th October, and that they *declined to make any advance on stock or Exchequer bills.*"[1]

[1] Tooke, iv. 314, 315; Economist, Oct. 9, 1847.

101. Commercial bankruptcies.

This announcement produced, as might have been expected, a fearful impression on the Stock Exchange. Consols rapidly fell from 85 to 83½; Exchequer bills were at 37s. discount; and such was the pressure for money that interest at the rate of 50 per cent was given for the use of it for only nine days. The failure of mercantile firms of the oldest standing and the highest respectability, beginning with that of Gower, Nephews, & Co., soon became very frequent, and much exceeded in amount anything recorded in British history, the severe monetary crisis of 1825 itself not excepted. It soon appeared that the crash was not to be confined to the grain trade, in which it had begun, but extended to other branches of business

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

and banking firms. On 13th October the Abingdon old bank came down; this was followed on the 18th by the stoppage of the Royal Bank of Liverpool, which was the more alarming as its paid-up capital was known to be £800,000, and it stood in the very front rank of the banking institutions of the kingdom. Consols in consequence fell to 77¾; a fall of 15 per cent from what they had been three months before, and the lowest point they reached during the crisis. Important bank failures ensued in Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, and Newcastle. In the last-mentioned town the banking discredit was exceedingly severe, and the most important bank in the district had a very narrow escape from a suspension of payment. The Bank of England reserve sunk between 16th and 30th October from £3,070,000 to £1,600,000 against £13,900,000 liabilities, and the bullion in both departments was only £8,300,000 on 23d October, while the notes in circulation still amounted to £21,200,000. In a word, the two weeks ending 23d October were an uninterrupted progression of disaster, discredit, and dismay; and at the close of the week everything portended not merely a crisis, but *a total suspension of all business and of all payments.*[1]

[1] Tooke, iv. 316, 317, 445, 446; Economist, Oct. 23, 1847; Chancellor of Exchequer's Statement, Nov. 30, 1847.

102. Suspension of the Bank Charter Act. Oct. 25.

Still Government, supported by Sir R. Peel, stood firm. The most earnest representations were made to them as to the state of the country, and the imminent ruin which threatened the whole of its commerce if the Bank Charter Act were not suspended, without effect. A most respectable deputation from Liverpool, representing the trading interests of that great emporium, was coolly dismissed with an answer that the Bank Act must at all hazards be maintained. A highly important communication from

Oct. 19.

the Marquess of Londonderry, as Lord-Lieutenant of the county of Durham, portraying the tremendous risk to which, from the suspension of credit and the want of money, the coal districts in that county were exposed, met with no better success. Even an earnest request for assistance

from the Scotch banks, hitherto deemed so flourishing, failed in shaking their steady resolve to maintain at all hazards the convertibility of a Bank of England note. But at length they were assailed in a quarter where they had no defence, and the country in consequence was saved. On Friday, 22d October, the London bankers had a meeting, at which it was agreed that, if Government would not sanction a deviation from the Act on the part of the Bank, they would withdraw their whole balances from it. This was decisive. The bankers' balances in the hands of the Bank of England were £1,774,472, and the reserve in the Bank to meet this amount was only £1,600,025.* In these circumstances, submission was a matter of necessity. The bankers' resolution was communicated to Government on Saturday 23d, and early on Monday 25th the celebrated letter signed by Lord John Russell and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was sent to the Bank, authorising a deviation from the Act.† That which neither a representation of the impending ruin of Liverpool and the manufacturing districts of Lancashire, nor the prospect of an hundred thousand colliers being thrown out of bread in the mining districts, could effect,[1] was at once brought about by the dread of the Bank being

Oct. 22.

Oct. 23.

[1] Chancellor of Exchequer's Statement; Parl. Deb. xcv. 397, 398.

* "*Question* 2881.—Supposing the London bankers had been, from the pressure upon them, obliged to withdraw a large amount of the balance which, I believe, equalled pretty nearly the amount of your reserve on the 22d October, what would have been the effect?—On the 22d October, the reserve in London was £1,600,025, and in the country £776,447, making together £2,376,472. *The bankers' balances were* £1,774,472. Supposing their balances had been withdrawn from us in the course of business, we should have had an opportunity of going into the market, and, *by selling securities*, we should have strengthened ourselves by taking notes out of the market, and then met the bankers' demand."—Mr MORRIS's (the Governor of the Bank of England) Examination; *First Report on Commercial Distress*, 1848, p. 221.

† "Her Majesty's Government have seen, with the deepest regret, the pressure which has existed for some weeks upon the commercial interests of the country, and that this pressure has been aggravated by a want of that confidence which is necessary for carrying on the ordinary dealings of trade. They have been in hopes that the check given to transactions of a speculative character, the transfer of capital from other countries, the influx of bullion, and the feeling which a knowledge of these circumstances might have been expected to produce, would have removed the prevailing distrust. Their hopes have,

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

"chequed out," in mercantile phrase, by the drafts of the London bankers. The Bank was authorised to issue notes beyond the limit prescribed by the Act, and in the mean time the rate of interest was fixed at 8 per cent.

103. Reflections on this change.

Thus did the famous Bank Charter Act, after having been three years in unrestrained operation, break down from the effect of its own provisions; but not until it had brought the country to the very verge of ruin! In the first two years of that period, it had inflamed to a most perilous degree the prevailing passion for speculation, and set on foot undertakings of the most gigantic kind, which required all the disposable capital of the country to carry forward and complete. During the last year it acted not less powerfully in contracting the circulation and suspending credit, at the very time when *both* were most imperatively required to carry forward the undertakings which *itself had set on foot*, and meet the effects, in the drain of gold, of the combined operation of the system of Free Trade recently introduced, and the Irish famine then in its full intensity. At this critical juncture, when, beyond any other recorded in British history, liberal paper advances were most called for to

however, been disappointed, and her Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion, that the time has arrived when they ought to attempt, by some extraordinary and temporary measure, to restore confidence to the mercantile and manufacturing community.

"For this purpose, they recommend to the Directors of the Bank of England, in the present emergency, *to enlarge the amount of their discount, and advance upon approved security;* but that, in order to restrain this operation within reasonable limits, a high rate of interest should be charged. In present circumstances, they would suggest, that the rate of interest should not be less than 8 per cent. If this course of dealing should lead to any infringement of the existing law, her Majesty's Government will be prepared to propose to Parliament, on its meeting, a bill of indemnity. They will rely upon the discretion of the Directors to reduce, as soon as possible, the amount of their notes, if any extraordinary issues should take place within the limits prescribed by law. Her Majesty's Government are not insensible to the evil of any departure from the law which has placed the currency of the country upon a sound basis; but they feel confident that, in the present circumstances, the measure which they have proposed may be safely adopted; and that, at the same time, the main provisions of that law, and the vital principle of maintaining the convertibility of the Bank of England note, may be firmly maintained."—We are, &c., JOHN RUSSELL, CHARLES WOOD.—TOOKE, iv. 449, 450.

sustain the credit and currency of the country, now strained to the uttermost by so many concurring causes, the bank-notes in circulation in the two islands were, by the operation of the Bank Charter Act, CONTRACTED TO THE EXTENT OF EIGHT MILLIONS below what they had been less than two years before. It may safely be affirmed, that a more ruinous and suicidal act never was perpetrated by any government on any country, and it is no wonder that it produced the most disastrous effects. And at last Sir R. Peel and the Ministers were compelled, by sheer necessity, to repeal their own Act, and do that which had been the one thing needful from the beginning, viz. authorise the Bank Directors to "enlarge the amount of their discounts and advances upon approved security," beyond the amount authorised by law.*

104. Great and immediate effect of this letter.

Never was a step taken by Government attended with such immediate and beneficial effects as this was. It never required to be acted upon: the knowledge that it had been granted was of itself sufficient to dispel the panic. The statement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer said had been constantly made to him for a few days before, "*Let us have notes;* charge 10 or 12 per cent upon

* TABLE SHOWING THE WHOLE BANK'S AND BANKERS' NOTES IN CIRCULATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FROM JUNE 1844 TO DECEMBER 1851.

Months ended.	England and Wales.				Scotland.	Ireland.		Total for United Kingdom.
	Bank of England.	Private Banks.	Joint Stock Banks.	Aggregate monthly Circulation of Country Issues.	Chartered Private and Joint Stock Banks.	Bank of Ireland.	Private and Joint Stock Banks.	
1844. June 22	20,634,000	4,743,057	3,665,104	8,408,161	3,117,988	3,488,300	2,080,277	37,728,726
,, Dec. 7	20,986,000	4,442,725	3,086,676	7,529,401	3,486,818	3,900,275	2,945,046	38,847,540
1845. June 21	21,277,000	4,398,833	3,131,109	7,529,942	3,485,531	3,882,600	2,736,432	38,911,505
,, Dec. 6	22,075,000	4,569,278	3,221,883	7,791,161	3,804,031	4,404,975	3,311,855	41,327,022
1846. June 20	20,553,000	4,456,629	3,128,185	7,584,814	3,508,655	4,119,850	2,852,176	38,618,495
,, Dec. 5	21,055,000	4,596,549	3,190,417	7,786,966	3,906,861	4,375,025	3,464,505	40,678,857
1847. June 19	19,078,000	4,385,608	3,088,327	7,473,935	3,647,314	3,927,400	2,137,551	35,664,200
,, Dec. 4	20,161,000	3,691,304	2,576,686	6,267,990	3,732,585	3,175,400	2,147,341	35,484,316
1848. June 17	18,683,000	3,628,563	2,598,625	6,227,188	3,437,587	2,863,800	1,797,546	33,009,121
,, Dec. 2	18,702,000	3,703,728	2,727,165	6,430,893	3,570,126	2,851,750	2,117,300	33,672,069
1849. June 16	19,312,000	3,510,417	2,661,300	6,201,717	3,380,902	2,481,775	1,564,700	32,941,094
,, Dec. 1	19,244,000	3,676,728	2,703,093	6,379,821	3,500,186	2,656,225	2,017,906	33,798,138
1850. June 15	20,401,000	3,552,821	2,745,227	6,298,048	3,471,528	2,530,125	1,711,686	34,412,387
,, Dec. 28	19,757,000	3,450,811	2,685,543	6,136,354	3,345,649	2,647,600	2,209,359	34,095,962
1851. June 14	20,154,000	3,513,765	2,805,280	6,319,045	3,474,171	2,460,900	1,898,018	34,216,134
,, Dec. 27	19,899,000	3,370,976	2,678,391	6,049,367	3,356,974	2,470,225	2,256,542	34,032,108

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1842-56, p. 34.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

them; we do not care what the rate of interest is; we do not mean to take the notes because we shall not want them, *only tell us that we can get them, and that will at once restore confidence.*"[1] In Mr Huskisson's words, on a former occasion, "the *stagnant and straitened circulation* of the country wanted life and aid, and became every day more embarrassed, whilst each new calamity produced by such a state of things contributed to spread and increase the general apprehension." In this disastrous state of things, the knowledge that the Bank Charter Act, which was the principal cause of the embarrassment, had been set aside, acted at once as a charm in restoring the suspended vitality of the country. The barrier which cut off the bullion in the issue department from the banking department having been removed, the pressure and apprehension which had existed for some weeks, owing to a knowledge of the smallness of the Bank's reserve, and of the bullion available for banking purposes, were at once removed. Eight millions of bullion being, if required, let in to the banking department, the general terror was at an end. Hoards of bank-notes and coin which had been secreted during the panic, immediately came forth; and although the high rate of interest was not immediately reduced, yet merchants in good credit no longer found any difficulty in getting their notes discounted. In a word, the crisis was at an end, and the Directors were ere long able to reduce the rate of interest charged at the Bank, till, on 27th January 1848, just three months after Lord John Russell's letter was written, it was lowered to 4 per cent[2*]—a decisive proof that the previous high rates had been entirely owing to a want of *currency*, and not of *capital;* for unquestionably, as will immediately appear, during

[1] Parl. Deb. xcv. 399.

[2] Tooke, iv. 319, 330.

* The rate of interest charged at the Bank was reduced as follows:—

25th October 1847,	8 per cent.	27th January 1848,	4 per cent.
22d November "	7 "	15th June "	3½ "
2d December "	6 "	2d November "	3 "
23d " "	5 "		

—TOOKE, vol. iv. p. 330; vol. v. p. 238.

1847.

the intervening period the available wealth of the country, so far from increasing, had undergone a serious diminution.

105. Meeting of Parliament, and Queen's Speech. Nov. 23.

As a matter of course, Parliament was called together, after this severe crisis, earlier than usual, both to deliberate on the state of the country, and to interpose the necessary sanction to the deviation authorised by Ministers from the Bank Charter Act. As might have been expected, the leading topic in the Queen's Speech, and in the debates which followed upon it, were the monetary crisis, and the working of that Act. The Speech said, "Her Majesty has seen, with great concern, the distress which has for some time prevailed among the commercial classes. The embarrassments of trade were at one period aggravated by so general a feeling of distrust and of alarm, that her Majesty, for the purpose of restoring confidence, authorised her Ministers to recommend to the Directors of the Bank of England a course of proceeding suited to such an emergency. This course might have led to an infringement of the law. Her Majesty has great satisfaction in being able to inform you that the law has not been infringed, that the alarm has subsided, and that the pressure on the banking and commercial interests has been mitigated. The abundant harvest with which this country has been blessed, has alleviated the evils which always accompany a want of employment in the manufacturing districts. Her Majesty, however, has to lament the recurrence of severe distress in Ireland, owing to the scarcity of the usual food of the people. Her Majesty trusts that this distress will be materially relieved by the exertions which have been made to carry into effect the law of last session for the support of the destitute poor. The Lord-Lieutenant has employed with vigour and energy the means which the law places at his disposal to detect offenders, and prevent the repetition of offences. But she feels it her duty to ask the assistance of Parliament in taking further precautions against the perpetration of crime in certain counties and districts of Ireland."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xcv. 14; Ann. Reg. 1847, 183.

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

106. Sir R. Peel's statement on the Bank Charter Act.

Foreseeing that, in the agitated state of the commercial classes in the country, it would be impossible to prevent inquiry into the working of the Bank Charter Act, Ministers wisely resolved to take the matter into their own hands, and thereby secure the appointment of the committee of inquiry in both houses. A long and important debate, which was continued through three nights, took place on the motion made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the appointment of a committee, but as the topics and arguments were the same as those of which an abstract has already been given on a recent occasion,[1] they need not be again recapitulated further than to notice the very important admission of Sir R. Peel on the working of the Bank Charter Act. The Right Honourable Baronet said: "I do not deny that one of the objects contemplated by the Act was the prevention of the convulsions which have hitherto occurred in consequence of the neglect of the Bank of England to take early precautions against the withdrawal of its treasure. I am bound to say that in that hope I have been disappointed. Looking to recent events, the depression which has since prevailed, and the numbers of houses which have been swept away, I am bound to admit that that purpose of the Bill of 1844, which sought to impose, if not a legal, at least a moral obligation upon the Bank, to prevent the necessity of extreme measures of stringency by timely precautions, has not been fulfilled. But the Bill of 1844 had a triple object. Its first object was that in which I admit it has failed, namely, to prevent, by early and gradual, severe and sudden contraction of the currency, and the panic and confusion inseparable from it. But the Bill had two other objects of at least equal importance—the one to maintain and guarantee the convertibility of the paper currency into gold, the other to prevent the difficulties which arise at all times from undue speculation being aggravated by the abuse of paper credit in the form of promissory-notes. In these two objects my belief is, that the Bill has completely succeeded. My belief

[1] Ante, c. xliii. § 83, et seq.

is, that you have had a guarantee for the maintenance of the principle of convertibility, such as you never had before; and that, whatever difficulties you are now suffering, those difficulties would have been greatly aggravated if you had not wisely taken the precaution of checking the unlimited issue of the notes of the Bank of England, of joint-stock banks, and of private banks.

107. Continued.

"The country is now suffering from the diminution of its capital and the extent of its speculations, and is visiting its blame on the very measure which has prevented its difficulties being ten times greater. Everybody is asking for money, and no one is willing to lend it, and parties talk of the Act of 1844 being the cause of this state of things, *the real want being a want of capital,* which no government can supply. The increase of currency is not a multiplication of capital, but only a check on the industry of individuals. At all times, a low rate of interest has led to exactly the same results of increased speculation in the first instance, and of great embarrassment in the next. The results we now witness are ascribed by the gentlemen opposite to Free Trade and the Act of 1844; but the history of the last sixty years proves that, in peace and in war, under the old standard, and before it was restored in the time of an inconvertible currency, as well as afterwards, a low rate of interest had always produced the same melancholy results. It was so in the panics of 1784, 1793, 1810, 1819, 1826, 1836, 1837. If you repeal the Act of 1844, you will render the operations of the Bank uncontrolled, and give back to joint-stock and private banks the power of unlimited issues. There has recently been undue speculation, a great issue of paper, and a discounting and rediscounting of bills, quite novel in the history of commerce. This country and the United States, with a small amount of the precious metals, possess a greater amount of bank-notes and promissory-notes than any country in the world. This gives great facility to enterprise, but it is

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

accompanied by great corresponding evils. We have of late been carrying on a system of commerce far beyond our capital, and the standard ought not to be endangered for the sake of bolstering it up. In such a case, it is unjust to charge the Act of 1844 as having been the cause of the deficiency of money, when men ought to be thankful for its having prevented the aggravation of their distress by checking an unlimited issue of paper.

108. Concluded.

"The present pressure, in the main caused by undue speculation, has been most seriously aggravated by the expenditure of £33,000,000 in the last year, in the purchase of food, which has caused a great exportation of gold, and by the application of an enormous capital for the construction of railways, which, though not in the end a dead loss, is, for the present at least, unaccompanied by profit. In these causes an ample explanation of the recent embarrassment is to be found, without imputing it to the Act of 1844. I cordially approve of the conduct which Government adopted with regard to the Bank on occasion of the crisis. The remedy for the existing evils was to be found, and could only be found, in the efforts of individuals, and in the contracting of engagements. If Government had relaxed the law earlier, the exertions of individuals would have been stopped, and new engagements would have been entered into. When, however, the general distrust in the commercial world had reached the length of panic, the intervention of Government to check it was justifiable and proper. No argument, however, can be drawn from the necessity of issuing the letter of 25th October against the Act which it suspended, for panic is one of those cases in which not legislation, but the discretion of Government, must be applied."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xcv. 650, 674; Ann. Reg. 1847, 216, 219.

On the other hand, it was maintained by Lord George Bentinck and Mr Thomas Baring, the last of whom had at first been a supporter of the Act of 1844: "The strongest condemnation of the Act of 1844 is to be found

in the facts, that it had not prevented the crisis, that it had not checked it after it occurred, and that, in order to stop it, an infringement of the law had become absolutely necessary. So far from having checked undue speculation, and so prevented the crisis, it had done just the reverse. The theory on which the Bill was founded was, that the Bank would be constrained to lessen its issues of paper as the gold in its coffers was diminished, and that speculation would be checked the moment it became dangerous. Has the result corresponded to this anticipation? So far from it, the gold in the coffers of the Bank, on 12th September 1846, was £16,354,000, and its paper in circulation was then £20,980,000. On 17th April 1847, the gold was reduced to £9,330,000, and the circulation, so far from being diminished, had *increased* to £21,228,000; that is, by £246,000! So much for the working of the Bill, in giving a timely check to undue speculation.[1]

109. Answer of Lord G. Bentinck and Mr Thomas Baring.

[1] Parl. Deb. xc. 615.

"The common opinion is, that if there is an over-issue of bank-notes, it will drive the gold out of the country. That was the fundamental position of the famous Bullion Report in 1811, and it has been the basis of all our subsequent legislation on the subject. But in this case, the very reverse took place; for, when it was known that notes would be freely issued, *hoards* of gold immediately made their appearance, and the stock of bullion in the Bank instantly began to increase. The notes came out, and, what was directly contrary to the theory, the gold came back at the same time. The effect of the infraction of the law, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement, was altogether magical; the whole panic ceased; the notes came out, the gold came in, all at the same time, and confidence was at once restored, all in consequence of the announced violation of the Bank Act. Apparently, that is an Act honoured more in the breach than the observance; but what is to be said in defence of an Act which never proves beneficial till it is repealed? What is to be said as to the scourge of 8 per cent

110. Continued.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

inflicted on the commercial community, a direct tax to that amount, imposed not on income, but on *endangered capital*, which all must admit sweeps away all prospect, while it lasts, of commercial profit, and is confessedly a direct consequence of the Act of 1844 ?

III. Concluded.

" We are told that it is the famine in Ireland which has caused all the distress, and it is doubtless true that a great deal of gold has gone out of the country in quest of provisions. But the real cause of it all is the combination of Free Trade with the Bank Charter Act. It is not the high price of grain which has occasioned the difficulty. During the last seven years of the war the average of wheat was 94s. 6d., and yet we were able to raise £70,000,000 yearly in taxes, and borrowed £180,000,000, which was at the rate of £26,000,000 a-year, and that not spent in our own country, but in foreign lands. Were we a poverty-stricken people then ? In the year 1815 we had 207,000 regulars, 80,000 militia, and 340,000 local militia in arms, besides 140,000 seamen, and we spent £131,000,000 ; and now with wealth and number increased by at least a half, we are told that we cannot employ 300,000 labourers in our own country without bringing the country to the verge of ruin. It is very easy for Government now to decry the railways, but who set them all agoing by lowering the deposit money from 10 to 5 per cent, and plumed themselves so long on the prosperity and increased consumption of taxable articles, which the expenditure on them occasioned in the country ? Look around you at America, France, Belgium, Bavaria, Prussia, Russia, and everywhere you see the railway system extending, as much in proportion to their resources as it has done here, and yet none of them have been rendered bankrupt in consequence. Belgium and France have had the potato disease as well as Ireland, and yet in the opening speeches of the legislative bodies in both these countries the Sovereigns congratulate the Chambers on the flourishing state of their respective countries. In-

stead of doing as Mr Pitt did in 1793, and other great men have done on such a crisis, and coming forward with £5,000,000 to meet the commercial distress, lent at £3, 16s., you delay setting the Bank free from its shackles till you yourself are on the verge of the precipice; and when you do so, you say you will make money as money-lenders of the public necessities, and raise the rate of interest to 8 per cent. While you have been intent only on saturating the country with gold and starving it of paper by means of the Bank Charter Act, France has been contracting, not the number of her notes, but the denomination, from £20 to £8. Bavaria has established saving-bank notes on the one hand, and railway-bank notes on the other; and the Emperor of Russia, while sending away his gold, has established three new sets of bank notes of £950,000 each. When more money is required for undertakings, they provide more; when the same takes place with you, you take away what already was there, and the consequence is that England, which in 1845, with a plentiful currency, stood on the highest pinnacle of prosperity, presented in 1847 a lamentable spectacle of shame, bankruptcy, and disgrace."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xcv. 159, 170; Ann. Reg. 1847, 198, 199.

112. Result of the debate.

No division took place on this able and interesting debate, but on the fourth night, on a question whether Mr Labouchere's name should stand on the committee, Ministers had a majority of 66, the numbers being 167 to 101, while on the original appointment of the committee the majority was still greater, being 212.[2] Committees were appointed accordingly in both houses, composed of men of the greatest ability, and most acquainted with the subject of investigation. They both commenced their labours, and examined a great number of witnesses on both sides. The two Committees, however, arrived at directly opposite conclusions on the subject. The Lords' Committee, by a majority of 1, sanctioned a most able and luminous report, which charged the Act of 1844 with having aggravated the commercial distress in

[2] Parl. Deb. xc. 672, 1039.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

1847.* On the other hand the committee of the Commons, by a majority of 12 to 10, came to the decision, "that, after a lawful review of all the evidence, your committee are of opinion that it is *not expedient* to make any alteration on the Bank Act of 1844." But this result arose from the accidental circumstance of two determined opponents of the report (Mr Herries and Mr Thomas Baring) having been absent on the final division, whose presence would have rendered the numbers 12 to 12, and brought the issue to the casting-vote of the chairman, Sir Francis Baring. And from the opinion expressed by him in the debate on the question, as to the difference between the result of the Act on the Bank circulation and the anticipations of the authors of the Act,[1] there is reason to believe he would, to a certain extent at least, have voted for a modification of the Act. And thus the Bank Charter Act would have stood condemned by the committees of both houses of Parliament, nominated by Ministers themselves.[2]

[1] Parl. Deb. xcv. 615.

[2] Tooke, v. 487, 491.

113. Reflections on this debate.

Sir R. Peel's pleading on this occasion, on behalf of the Bank Charter Act, is a model of that species of rhetorical skill in which he so much excelled, and which consisted in eluding difficulties instead of meeting them, and giving his speech an air of candour, while in fact he was throwing the whole blame of the catastrophe which had occurred off his own shoulders upon those of others. Thus

* "The committee are of opinion that the recent panic was materially aggravated by the operation of the Bank Charter Act, and by the proceedings of the Bank itself. This effect may be traced directly to the Act of 1844, in the legislative restriction imposed on the means of accommodation while a large amount of bullion was held in the coffers of the Bank, and during a time of favourable exchanges; and it may be traced to the same cause indirectly, as a consequence of great fluctuations in the rate of discount, and of capital previously advanced at an unusually low rate of interest. This course the Bank would hardly have felt itself justified in taking, had not the impression existed, that by the separation of the issue and the banking departments, one inflexible rule for regulating the Bank issue had been substituted by law, instead of the discretion formerly vested in the Bank. The banking department was thus considered to be absolved from all obligation but that connected with the pecuniary interests of the proprietors."—*Lords' Report on Commercial Distress*, p. 4.

he took credit to himself for the candid admission that the Bank Act had not answered his first object, which was, during prosperity, to check imprudent speculation; nay, he went so far as to quote the graphic description given by Mr Alexander Baring (now Lord Ashburton) of the mania of 1825, as peculiarly applicable to that which had immediately followed the passing of his own Bank Charter Act.* By so doing, under the air of candour he in effect laid the responsibility of all that had occurred upon the Bank Directors for not having earlier taken precautions to check the mania. He said, with truth, that a low rate of interest has for long been the invariable precursor of imprudent speculation and commercial distress in the British empire; but he forgot to mention that it was his own Act which at once flung down interest from 4 to 2½ per cent, and gave rise in a great measure to all the extravagant manias which followed. He blamed the Bank Directors for the extent of their issues of notes, forgetting that the Act *compelled* them to issue them in exchange for all gold brought to their doors, and that when it came in abundance, as it did in 1845 and 1846, then notes necessarily issued in equal numbers; and that they had no means of defraying the cost of the immense treasure accumulated in their vaults but by lowering discounts and pushing their business to the utter-

* "The Bank of England, by the facilities which they afforded, had been the authors of that dangerous redundancy of money that gave rise to the wild speculations which abounded in every part of the country in 1825. *It seemed as if bedlam had broken loose on the Royal Exchange.* The same frantic spirit overran the country. The bankers in London, and their agents in the country, and the customers of both, were actuated by the same universal desire to put out their money in any way they could. Then, all of a sudden, the very reverse of this system came into practice. A panic seized the public. Men would not part with their money on any terms. Men of undoubted wealth and real capital were seen walking about the streets of London not knowing whether they would be able to meet their engagements next day. All confidence was lost, and scarcely one man could be found to trust his neighbour. Men were known to seek for assistance—and that too without effect—who were known to be worth £200,000." Thus far Lord Ashburton. "These words," said Sir R. Peel, "with *almost equal fidelity*, describe the state of affairs in 1846."—Sir R. Peel's *Speech*, Dec. 3, 1847; *Parl. Deb.* xc. 663.

CHAP. XLIII. 1847.

most. He blamed them for not having sooner taken the alarm, and contracted their issues the moment exchanges became adverse, forgetting that this was impossible without general ruin when so large a capital was involved by his own acts in railway undertakings, which required several years of constant outlay for their completion; and that the only effect of an earlier contraction of the currency would have been an earlier commencement of the catastrophe. He boasted that, at least in the general crash, the convertibility of the Bank of England notes had been preserved, insensible to the fact that that convertibility had been maintained by a nation's ruin, and that to peril commercial existence on the retention of gold, the most difficult of earthly things to be retained, is the same thing as to render the national subsistence entirely dependent, as in Ireland, on one, and that the most precarious, species of food.

114. Great distress in the country from the monetary crisis.

Parliament was prorogued on the 20th December till 3d February 1848, and Ministers flattered themselves that the worst was over, and that, as the Bank interest had now been lowered to 4 per cent, commercial enterprise would revive, and manufacturing industry resume its wonted activity. They were never more completely mistaken. It is as easy to bring on a monetary crisis as it is to cut down a tree; but long years of growth and suffering are required to obviate its effects. The four years, from 1848 to 1851, barely sufficed to restore the credit and enterprise of the nation; and in fact it never was completely restored till the gold discoveries came into operation, which in 1852 changed the face of the world. The bankruptcies in the United Kingdom, which in 1845 had been 1263, rose in 1846 to 1729, and in 1847 to 2136. In 1848 the number reached the unparalleled amount of 2370, being nearly double of what they had been three years before.[1] It was computed that in the three last months of 1847, before the interference

[1] Ann. Reg. of these years; Pub. Doc.

of Government, the failures in Manchester and the surrounding manufacturing districts of Lancashire amounted to £15,900,000.* In Glasgow, Liverpool, and Birmingham, things were not less disastrous; and not even in the worst period of the crisis of 1826 and 1839 had the pressure in the metropolis been so widespread and severe.

115. Details of the railway and mercantile losses.

But these figures, great as they are, give but a faint idea of the disasters of this melancholy period. It is computed by the best-informed writers on the subject on the Liberal side, that, up to October 1848, £200,000,000 had been called for to pay up the calls on railway shares, for which the holders had given up £250,000,000, and that, at that date, the whole was not worth more than £150,000,000; so that £100,000,000 had, in a year after the crash of October 1847, been lost on these investments alone. Consols had fallen from 93 to 79½, at which last figure very large sales had been made to meet the demands consequent on the crisis, involving a loss of at least £100,000,000; and as stock of every description, whether of other shares or goods, had fallen within the same period on an average 30 per cent also, it is not unreasonable to estimate the entire loss of that commercial crisis at the enormous sum of £300,000,000—"a tolerably high price to pay," as was well observed by one of the ablest members of the House of Commons, and the best informed and enlightened on the subject of the currency, "for the convertibility of the Bank of England's note." [1] *

[1] Tooke on Prices, v. 234; Economist, Oct. 21, 1845.

* "In July two houses became insolvent, the joint amount of whose liabilities was £100,000; in August sixteen gave way for a total amounting to £2,639,000; in September twenty-six broke down for £6,520,000; and in October thirty-five went for a total of £6,840,000—in all, from July to the period when her Majesty's Ministers interfered, £15,969,000."—Lord Stanley, Dec. 2, 1847; *Parl. Deb.* xcv. 495.

† Edward Stillingfleet Cayley, Esq., M.P. for the North Riding of Yorkshire. "Such," said he, "had been the results of a system which was called sound and stable, and which, to secure the convertibility of about £10,000,000

CHAP. XLIII.

1847.

116. Rise in cotton, from the crash of 1839 in America.

Three circumstances conspired to augment the distress of this disastrous period, which were in a great measure independent of the monetary crisis in Great Britain, though both the indirect effect of similar measures in other countries. The first of these was the great rise in the price of cotton, which took place at the very time when the crisis was at its height, in consequence of the diminished supply of that article in the United States of America, from the effects of the crash, produced there, by the insane crusade of General Jackson against the banks of that country, the details of which have already been given.[1] The effect of this had been to produce such ruin among the cotton-merchants of the Southern States, that cotton fell from 6d. to 3d. a pound; and for several years cultivation of that great article of produce could scarcely be carried on at a profit, and the greater part of those engaged in it were rendered insolvent. The effect of this great reduction of the supply, of course, was ere long attended by a corresponding rise in its price; and accordingly, Georgia cotton, which in 1845 was 3½d. the pound, had risen, in 1847, to 6d. and 8d. This great enhancement of the price of the raw material must have proved a great clog upon manufacturing enterprise and success, if occurring at any time; but it became doubly severe from its occurring at the very time when accommodation

[1] Ante, c. xxxvii. § 7, 32.

bank-notes into gold, had sacrificed about £300,000,000 of property."—Mr Cayley, Dec. 2, 1847; *Parl. Deb.* xcv. 477.

Table of Prices of the principal Articles of Commerce, 1845-51.

Years.	Wheat. Per qr.	Cotton. Per lb.	Iron. Per ton.	Sugar. Per cwt.	Tea. Per lb.	Silk. Per lb.	Coffee. Per cwt.
1845	46s. 7d.	3½d. to 4d.	£9 15s.	33s. 6d.	11d.	16s.	84s.
1846	54s. 8d.	3½d. ,, 5d.	10 0	35s. 0d.	9d.	15s. 6d.	35s.
1847	68s. 9d.	6d. ,, 8d.	10 0	33s. 10d.	8d.	12s.	32s.
1848	50s. 6d.	4½d. ,, 6d.	8 0	21s. to 29s.	8d. to 18d.	10s. to 16s.	25s.
1849	44s. 3d.	4½d. ,, 5d.	6 0	23s. ,, 27s.	8d. ,, 21d.	12s. ,, 17s.	20s.
1850	40s. 3d.	5½d. ,, 6⅞d.	6 0	23s. ,, 27s.	10d. ,, 21d.	18s. ,, 26s.	35s. to 100s.
1851	30s. 6d.	5½d. ,, 6d.	5 10	18s. ,, 26s.	8d. ,, 18d.	14s. ,, 19s.	35s. ,, 80s.

—Tooke *On Prices*, iv. 415, 427, 435; v. 265, 266; and *Statistical Abstract*, No. VI. p. 30.

had been rendered so difficult from the sudden contraction of the currency in the last months of 1847, and the simultaneous occurrence of internal and external disasters, at the same period, in the British Islands, and on the continent of Europe.[1]*

1847. 1 Parl. Deb. xcv. 475.

117. Vast variations in the price of provisions.

The next circumstance which came to aggravate most seriously the general distress arising from the monetary crisis, was the extreme variations which occurred in the course of the year in the price of provisions. Wheat, which in February had been at 102s. the quarter, was selling in November at 48s., and all other species of grain in proportion. The effect of this prodigious change, the consequence of the Irish famine and vast importation, besides involving almost every person engaged in the grain trade in ruin, was to expose the working classes, during the first half of the year, to all the suffering produced by famine-prices, and to subject all those engaged in the cultivation of the soil, in the latter part of it, to severe distress, arising from the difficulty, with such reduced prices, of paying rents and poor-rates. The effect of this was very serious; for it at once spread the embarrassment from the commercial to the agricultural classes, who for some years had enjoyed a considerable degree of prosperity; and thus reopened the old divisions arising from the repeal of the Corn Laws, at the very time when the united efforts of all classes were required to stem the flood of misfortune with which the nation was from other causes overwhelmed.

Contemporaneous with this evil was another of still greater magnitude, which for the whole of 1848 seriously

* "Subsequent to 1839, from the great monetary pressure in England, the price of cotton had fallen in England to about half of what it was in 1838, so that it became more profitable to cultivate maize, sugar, and coffee, than cotton. From this cause our cotton manufactures have been suffering from a scarcity in the raw material, in these fabrics, and a rise in its price."—MR CAYLEY, Dec. 1847; *Parl. Deb.* xcv. 6, 75.—Mr Cayley's speech on this occasion was the best delivered in either house of Parliament; and so Lord J. Russell admitted.

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

affected the export trade to several countries of Europe, and produced a considerable diminution in the general exports of the country. This was the FRENCH REVOLUTION IN FEBRUARY, which overturned Louis Philippe, induced for a brief season a republican government, and was the harbinger of numberless calamities to every part of Europe. Previous to that great event there had been a very severe monetary crisis in France in the latter part of 1847; but the convulsion of the succeeding year paralysed commerce in that country so completely that the British exports to it fell at once to considerably less than a half of what they had been in the preceding year, and did not recover for some years after. The same was the case in a lesser degree with Germany, to both of which countries the convulsion rapidly spread, and the effect, combined with the monetary crisis in Great Britain itself, was to lower the general exports of the country six millions.* This was not a very great decline on an export trade at that period amounting to £58,000,000; but coming as it did at a period when the country was already overwhelmed by difficulties arising from other causes, it proved a very serious aggravation of the general distress.

118. Pernicious effect of the French Revolution of 1848.

Serious as this source of embarrassment was to the classes engaged in the export trade to Europe, it yet yielded in importance to the effect of the prodigious inundation of Irish poor which flowed into all the western counties of Britain, at the same period, from the effects of the famine in Ireland. The numbers which, impelled by hunger and the dread of starvation, then crowded every vessel from the ports of Ireland to those of Britain, would

119. Immense influx of destitute Irish into Western Britain.

* BRITISH EXPORTS FROM 1846 TO 1849.

Years.	France.	Germany.	Prussia.	Italy.	Naples and Sicily.	To all World.
1846	£2,715,963	£6,326,210	£544,035	£919,173	£993,731	£57,786,876
1847	2,554,283	6,007,366	553,968	637,748	663,690	58,842,377
1848	1,025,521	4,668,259	404,144	751,953	695,666	52,849,445
1849	1,951,269	5,386,246	428,748	777,273	1,115,260	63,596,025

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1842-56, p. 18.

be deemed incredible if not attested by contemporary evidence, and ascertained by authentic inquiry. It has been already mentioned, that such was the influx of Irish poor into Liverpool in December 1847, that in eleven days the parishes of that city had to furnish relief to 198,000 paupers in addition to those of their own; and that it was deemed a subject of general thankfulness when the number was *only* 2000 a-week.[1] And it was ascertained by an official inquiry, set on foot in the latter city by the magistrates and sheriff, that between November 1, 1847, and April 1, 1848, no less than 42,800 Irish landed at Glasgow, almost all in a state of destitution, and not a few bringing with them the seeds of contagion and death. The magnitude of this burden will not be duly appreciated unless it is kept in view that in Glasgow, and its immediate vicinity, there were in the latter month 39,000 persons out of employment, involving at least 100,000 more in utter misery.[2] It is not going too far to say that, during the winter and spring of 1847-48, half a million of Irish poor migrated into, and settled permanently, in the provinces of western Britain, then suffering severely under their own causes of disaster—a transposition of the human race unparalleled in modern times, and which resembles the era, twelve centuries before, when the myriads of the migratory northern nations poured into the decaying provinces of the Roman Empire.

[1] Lord Brougham, Parl. Deb. lxxxix. 771.

[2] Personal knowledge, founded on official inquiry.

120. Extreme severity of the pressure on the middle classes.

One circumstance which had never before occurred, rendered this monetary crisis, beyond any other, long continued and severe, especially to the middle classes. This was the immense sums which, during the prosperous years 1845 and 1846, had been invested in railway shares, chiefly by those classes in towns; undertakings which not only required a very great expenditure of capital, but a very long time for their completion. The sums requisite to finish the railways which had been undertaken, were little short of £300,000,000; and in Dec. 1845, there had been paid up of this sum £100,000,000, the shares

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

corresponding to which were worth £160,000,000.. But two years after—in Dec. 1849—the aspect of things was totally changed. The sum paid up was then no less than £230,000,000 ; and the market price of the whole was only £110,000,000, showing a loss on the *paid-up capital* of £120,000,000 ; and on the market value, compared with Dec. 1845, of £150,000,000. The effects of this immense change were to the last degree disastrous. As has been well observed by Tooke, "During 1844 and 1845, every person engaged in railway speculation grew richer and richer, and from 1847 to 1850, every person holding railway shares grew poorer and poorer." [1] The consequence was, that great numbers of the railway undertakings were abandoned, and those which were continued were carried on only at the cost of an incredible amount of suffering and ruin to the persons engaged in them.* What rendered the demands for payment of the calls on these shares so eminently disastrous, was, that unless they were paid up, the whole money previously advanced upon them was lost ; that a great proportion of them had become unsaleable, and none could be disposed of, but at a ruinous loss ; and that, at the very time when the calls upon them were most urgent, the banks, one and all, sternly refused all accommodation, even on the most ample security. The contraction of the currency by eight millions at a time when an extension of it was most loudly called for, rendered such refusals on their part a matter of absolute necessity. In these circumstances, the calls on the railway shares, which in 1848 and 1849 were not less than £100,000,000, had to be provided almost entirely from the incomes and savings of the unfortunate shareholders, who were chiefly found in the middle and wealthier classes ;[2] and when it is recollected that this occurred during a period of a severe monetary crisis, great foreign anxiety, and absolute famine

[1] Tooke, v. 273.

[2] Tooke and Newmarsh, v. 369, 372; Economist, Sept. 22, 1849; Railway Times, Sept. 30, 1849.

* "In December 1845, the official list of the London Stock Exchange quoted no less than 280 different kinds of railway shares ; in December 1849, the number had fallen to 160."—Tooke and Newmarsh, v. 371.

in the neighbouring island, it may be conceived what ruin and suffering they necessarily occasioned,* and at what a sacrifice to the nation the magnificent network of railways, with which it is now overspread, has been constructed.

121. Immediate benefits of the railway expenditure.

Yet has the vast, and to the individuals concerned, too often ruinous expenditure on these railways, been attended with important benefits, both immediate and ultimate, to the country. In the first instance, it *forcibly prolonged* a great, and to the working classes profitable, outlay on the wages of labour, under circumstances when, but for the peculiar nature of these investments, it would have been entirely stopped. It is evident that when the ordinary banks refused to grant any further accom-

* "From the fall of dividends on all the lines, and continued pressure of calls, the distrust of all railway property became such, that towards the autumn of 1849 large masses of it were practically unsaleable. The retrospect of the third quarter of 1849 is the most dismal picture it has ever been our duty to lay before our readers. Gloom, panic, and confusion, appeared to have taken full possession of the railway market, and a commensurate depression in the value of all lines, good, bad, and indifferent, has been the result. A glance at the market will suffice to convey a knowledge of the overwhelming depreciation which now exists,—a depreciation including even the principal lines, the main arteries of the internal traffic of the country. Within the last few weeks the stock of the London and North-Western Railway has fallen 20 per cent. In some of the Journals, the loss in September 1849, sustained by the then holders of railway shares, has been estimated *at so large an amount as* 180 *millions sterling.*"—*Railway Times*, Sept. 30, 1849.

The following Table exhibits the variations on the price of the stock of the leading railways, from Jan. 1846 to Jan. 1852, when the gold discoveries set in:—

	Jan. 1, 1846.	Jan. 1, 1847.	Jan. 1, 1848.	Jan. 1, 1849.	Jan. 1, 1850.	Jan. 1, 1851.	Jan. 1, 1852.
London and North-Western,	215	196	150	121	100	123	118
Great Western, . . .	195	150	105	93	58	77	86
South-Western, . . .	150	170	120	94	61	66	87
Midland, ...	150	130	107	100	45	47	57
Brighton, ...	135	118	82	62	80	87	95
South-Eastern, . . .	190	120	90	70	57	66	64
York and North-Midland, .	210	190	144	140	34	44	44

—TOOKE and NEWMARSH, v. 360, 361.

Thus, even after the lapse of seven years, the prices of railway stock, till the gold discoveries came into play, which they did in 1852, was even in the most favourable cases little more than a half, in many only a third or a fourth, of what it had been at the beginning of the period.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

modation, and most of those set up to make advances on shares had become bankrupt, if the shareholders of the railways had not been forced to go on with their undertakings, they would either have abandoned altogether, or at least suspended in the mean time, their prosecution. Then the whole labourers employed on the works themselves, being 300,000, besides, at least, double the number engaged in preparing iron or other articles necessary for their completion, would have been thrown out of employment. But fortunately for the public, though unfortunately for the shareholders, this was rendered impossible by the nature of the undertakings. These required years for their completion, and all concerned in them were aware that the only way to render the capital already sunk in their construction productive, was to force them on, at all hazards, to their completion. Hence, though about a third of them, being chiefly those in which no sensible progress had been made, were abandoned, yet the principal lines were all, by great exertions on the part of the directors, prosecuted, and finally brought to a conclusion. Thus was the storm averted during a considerable time—and that the most critical in the modern history of Great Britain—from a large proportion of the working classes. This was done, doubtless, at the expense of the middle classes, holders of the shares, who were impoverished or ruined, to an unparalleled extent, by the calls on them as railway proprietors, and the fearful reductions which had taken place in the value of their stock. But how calamitous soever to individuals, and even important classes in society, this must be considered as a very fortunate circumstance for the country, because it brought to a completion these noble and useful undertakings, and diminished, in a sensible degree, the sufferings of the working classes, when already involved in distress, burdened by an inroad of half a million of Irish, and at a time when the events in France had, to a great extent, revived the spirit of Chartism in the country.[1]

[1] Tooke, v. 367, 369.

1848.

122. Magnitude and perfection of the railway system in Britain.

And truly the railway system, which, during these calamitous years, and under all the difficulties arising from a restricted currency and monetary crisis, was carried on and completed in Great Britain, was of the most perfect and magnificent description, and deservedly places this country at the head of all similar undertakings in any part of the world. A comparison of the railways in Great Britain with those in France, Germany, Belgium, or America in the end of 1854, proves that, in proportion to the area of the country, the system is more complete than in any other country taken as a whole, and exceeded only by those of Massachusetts in America, in a part of a country.* Even in Scotland the progress of these undertakings has been nearly twice as rapid as in Germany; and if allowance is made for the extent of mountain surface, where they are impossible, it enjoys a more complete system than either Belgium, the garden of conti-

* Comparative extent of Railway open in the end of 1854, in different Countries.

	Area in English Square Miles.	Miles of Railway open in 1854.	Miles of Railway to each 100 Square Miles.
England and Wales,	57,800	6,100	15.2
Scotland,	30,240	1,040	3.5
Ireland,	31,870	900	2.8
	119,910	8,040	6.7
France,	205,000	2,910	1.4
Germany,	268,000	5,400	2
Belgium,	11,000	530	4.8
	484,000	8,840	1.8
Massachusetts,	7,800	1,300	16.6
New York,	47,000	2,700	5 8
Pennsylvania,	46,000	2,000	4.3
Ohio,	40,000	3,000	7.7
Indiana,	33,800	1,500	4.4
Illinois,	55,400	2,800	5
Twenty-two other States of the Union,	1,351,000	8,200	0.6
Totals,	2,184,000	38,380	1.5

—Tooke and Newmarsh, v. 377.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

nental Europe, or the Western States of America, where they are constructed at the least expense, and with the greatest facility. When the circumstances of unexampled difficulty and distress under which the greater part of these lines were constructed are considered, their completion must be regarded as perhaps the most wonderful monument that ever was erected of British wealth, enterprise, and perseverance.[1]

[1] Tooke, v. 377, 378.

123. Fall in the exports and revenue.

When calamities so great and serious, arising from so many causes, had stricken a nation, it was inevitable that its general industry, foreign trade, and revenue should suffer. This accordingly took place in Great Britain to a remarkable extent in 1848: both the revenue and the exports exhibited a serious falling-off in 1847 and 1848, as compared with the years which had preceded and followed them.* The surplus of expenditure above income in these two disastrous years was £2,956,684 in the first, and £796,419 in the last, besides the loans of £8,000,000 for the Irish famine. The imports alone exhibited a great and striking increase in these two years—having advanced from £75,000,000 in 1846 to £93,000,000 in 1848, and £105,000,000 in 1849. This arose partly from the lavish expenditure on the railways, which was wrenched out of the middle classes, and bestowed on the working—of course, the great consumers of imported articles—but chiefly from the enormous importations of grain which took place in these years, in the last of which it amounted in value to £33,000,000[2]

[2] Stat. Abst., No. IV., 1842-1856, 4, 5.

* EXPORTS, IMPORTS, REVENUE, SHIPPING, AND EXPENDITURE OF GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1845 TO 1850.

Years.	Exports.	Imports.	Revenue.	Shipping—Tons. Cleared out.	Expenditure.
1845	£60,111,082	£85,281,958	£53,060,354	6,031,587	£49,242,713
1846	57,786,876	75,953,875	53,970,138	6,314,571	50,943,830
1847	58,842,377	90,921,866	51,546,264	7,083,163	54,502,948
1848	52,849,445	93,547,134	53,388,717	6,780,691	54,185,136
1849	63,596,025	105,874,607	52,291,749	7,084,488	50,853,623
1850	71,367,885	117,231,467	52,810,630	7,404,588	50,231,874

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1842-1856, 19, 4, 27; PORTER, 356.

instead of two or three millions, which had gone out for similar importations before the change in the Corn Laws had taken place.

124. Great increase of paupers and criminals.

But these figures, expressive as they are, convey no adequate idea of the general suffering during these calamitous years. It is in the records of pauperism and crime that the real mirror of the condition of the working classes is to be found—and the picture they presented was to the very last degree gloomy. From the statistical returns it appears that in the quarters ending July 1847 and 1848, the poor relieved in England and Wales had amounted to the enormous number of 1,721,350 and 1,876,541 respectively, of whom no less than 480,584 in the first year, and 577,445 in the second, *were able-bodied.* The expenditure on this enormous mass of paupers had swelled in a similar proportion; it had risen in England to £6,180,000, being nearly as high as it had been in 1834, when the new Poor-Law Act, from which so much was expected, was passed. In Scotland, the paupers relieved, including casual poor, rose to 204,416 in 1848, while in Ireland the number relieved in that year was 2,177,651. Thus, in the two islands, the number relieved in one year was 4,258,609, being above 1 in 7 of the entire population, which at that period was about 27,000,000; while the sum assessed for their support was no less than £8,350,000, besides £8,000,000 borrowed by Government, and expended on the Irish poor.* It may safely be affirmed, that so magnificent an instance of charity never before was exhibited in the history of the world; and that as unquestionably it was the means of bringing Great Britain safely through the

* Viz. in 1848:—

	Number of Poor.	Sum Assessed.
England and Wales,	1,876,540	£6,180,765
Scotland, in all,	204,416	544,333
Ireland,	2,177,651	1,627,700
Total,	4,258,609	£8,352,798

—Nicholls' *English, Scotch, and Irish Poor-Laws*, 466, 363, 222.

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

terrible crisis which at that period proved fatal to so many other states, so it worthily, by the blessing of God, earned that salvation.*

125. Increase of crime, emigration, and decline of population.

Other indications of extreme and general suffering, not less decisive than the poor-rate returns, appeared at the same period. Crime, that sure index to straitened circumstances among the working classes, increased so rapidly between 1845 and 1848, that it had advanced, in that short period, above 70 per cent; it had swelled from 44,000 committals to 74,000.† The traffic on railway lines, which in 1845 was £2640 per mile, had

* NUMBER OF POOR RELIEVED, AND SUMS EXPENDED IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND, FROM 1845 TO 1851.

Years.	England.		Scotland.	Ireland.	Sums Expended.		
	Number of Poor.	Of whom able-bodied.		In and out.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1845	1,470,970	..	63,070	114,205	£5,039,703	£258,814	£280,945
1846	1,332,089	..	69,432	243,933	4,954,204	295,232	425,183
1847	1,721,350	480,584	74,161	2,043,505	5,298,787	433,915	803,684
1848	1,876,540	577,445	77,732	2,142,766	5,180,765	544,333	1,835,634
1849	1,043,836	201,644	82,357	1,174,267	5,792,963	577,044	2,177,651
1850	978,373	151,159	79,031	755,557	5,395,022	581,553	1,430,108
1851	920,543	154,525	76,206	519,775	4,962,704	535,943	1,141,647

No one who has not engaged in the task can conceive the labour which has been expended on the above table, simple as it may appear, chiefly from the contradictory accounts presented in different official reports of the number of paupers relieved, owing to *the periods of the year* when the returns were made, which often made them vary by nearly a half. This explains the vast difference between the English poor, as given by PORTER, 94, and NICHOLLS, 466, and the *Statistical Abstract, No. IV.*, 35, from the former of which the above table has been compiled. The Scotch poor does not include those casually relieved, which in 1848 was 126,684, of whom 81,938 were in Lanarkshire alone.—NICHOLLS' *Scotch Poor-Law*, 222.

† COMMITTED FOR SERIOUS CRIMES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Years.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.	Total.
1844	26,542	3,575	19,448	49,565
1845	24,303	3,537	16,696	44,536
1846	25,107	4,069	18,492	47,668
1847	28,833	4,635	31,209	64,677
1848	30,349	4,909	38,521*	73,780
1849	27,816	4,357	41,989	74,142

* Irish Rebellion.

—PORTER, 668, 646, 658.

sunk in 1849 to £1780—a decline, as the *Times* justly remarked, "sufficiently alarming, and which looks like a sinking to zero."[1] But every other feature of the general distress was eclipsed by the astonishing start which the number of emigrants from the United Kingdom took, which mounted up suddenly from 70,000 in 1844, to 300,000 in 1849, and has since that reached 368,000 in a single year.* So great a transportation of human beings across the ocean never took place since the beginning of the world; and that it was mainly owing to other causes than the potato famine of 1846 is decisively proved by the fact that it went on steadily increasing for a course of years *after* that calamity had ceased, and reached its highest point in 1852, five years subsequent to a public thanksgiving, offered up by order of Government for the abundant harvest of 1847. During the intervening years the population of the empire was not only arrested in its increase, but, for *the first time during three centuries, considerably declined* †—the emigration exceeding the natural increase every year by from 50,000 to 100,000

[1] Times, Oct. 21, 1849.

* Emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland.

Years.	Emigrants.	Years.	Emigrants.
1841,	118,592	1847,	258,270
1842,	128,344	1848,	248,089
1843,	57,212	1849,	299,498
1844,	70,686	1850,	280,849
1845,	93,501	1851,	335,966
1846,	129,851	1852,	368,764
	6)598,186(		6)1,791,435(
Average,	99,532	Average of 6 years,	296,906

—*Parl. Papers; Stat. Abstract, No. IV.*, 1842-56, p. 36.

† Decline of Population in the British Islands.

	Great Britain.	Ireland.	Total.
Population of empire by census of 1831,	16,364,693	7,767,401	24,132,294
„ „ „ 1841,	18,658,372	8,175,124	26,833,496
Increase to 1846, half of preceding 10 years,	1,154,000	382,960	1,536,960
Probable population in 1846,	19,812,372	8,558,084	28,370,456
Actual population by census of 1851,	20,959,477	6,552,385	27,511,862
Increase,	1,147,105		
Decrease, 1846-51,		2,005,699	
Total Decrease of empire;			858,594

—*Irish Census*, 1853, p. xvi.—Introduction.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

souls. The census reports prove that the inhabitants of the two islands were less by 858,000 at the close of the period than they had been at its commencement.

126. Extreme suffering in Glasgow and the manufacturing districts.

Melancholy and interesting as these facts are, as indicating the extraordinary distress which pervaded the British empire at this disastrous period, they yet do not present so harrowing a picture as the great manufacturing towns exhibited. Glasgow may be taken as a fair specimen of their condition at that period. In that city and its immediate vicinity, containing at that period 350,000 souls, there were found to be, as already mentioned by official inquiries set on foot by the magistrates and sheriff in April 1848, no less than 39,000 persons out of employment, involving, with their families, at least 130,000 human beings, or more than a third of the entire inhabitants; while into that scene of woe no less than 42,800 Irish had poured in the five months before. The paupers in the city had risen from 7454 in 1845-46 to 51,852 in 1848-49; and in the latter year the pauper funerals were 4042, being nearly a third of the total burials.* The whole persons receiving parochial relief in Lanarkshire in 1848 were 104,623, of whom no less than 81,938 were "casual poor"—for the most part able-bodied men out of work. The population of the county at that time was about 530,000; so that nearly a fifth of the whole number was receiving parochial relief.† It is difficult to say what would have become of this prodigious mass of paupers, if the decision of the

* Proportion of Pauper Funerals in Glasgow in 1848 and 1849.

Years.	Paupers.	Years.	Pauper Funerals.	Total Burials.
1845-6, .	7,454	1848, . .	4,042	13,179
1846-7, .	15,911	1849, . .	3,577	13,731
1848-9, .	51,852			

—Strangs' *Mortality Report of Glasgow*, 1849.

† Paupers in Lanarkshire in the Year 1848.

Years.	On Roll.	Casual.	Total.
1846-7, . . .	17,204	32,233	49,487
1847-8, . . .	22,685	81,938	104,623

—*Poor-Law Report*, 1849, 24.

Court of Session had then been pronounced, finding that in Scotland the able-bodied poor had no right to parochial relief. But fortunately that decision was not pronounced till February 1849, and in the mean time the Sheriff of Lanarkshire had pronounced a judgment finding them entitled to relief, which was afterwards reversed by the Court of Session. But in the interim the Sheriff's decision was followed by the parochial boards in Lanarkshire; and the Board of Supervision at Edinburgh issued a circular recommending, during the existing distress, all the parochial boards in Scotland to follow their example, which was generally done. Thus the critical period was tided over, and by the aid of magnificent subscriptions from the wealthy classes in Glasgow, the general suffering was relieved until the advent of more prosperous times.[1] *

[1] Nicholls' Scotch Poor-Law, 221, 222; Personal knowledge.

127. Outbreak in Glasgow in March 1848.

It was in this state of anxiety and suffering, especially in the manufacturing districts of Great Britain and in the whole of Ireland, that the French Revolution of 1848 suddenly broke upon the country, and the example was afforded of a powerful government, supported by a large revenue and splendid army, being suddenly overthrown by a well-concerted urban revolt. Although the country had hitherto been quiet to a most extraordinary degree, in the midst of all its suffering, yet it could hardly be expected that, with such an example before their eyes, and under the pressure of such severe and general distress, something of the same sort should not be attempted in this country. It was probably owing to the extreme suffering which had long existed in Glasgow that, notwithstanding the proverbial caution of the Scotch character, the spark first kindled among its inhabitants. During

* "The Commissioners recommend, in the event of your being called upon to relieve an able-bodied man, or the children of an able-bodied man, on the ground that he cannot find employment, that the ground of the complaint should be removed by providing employment for them. They recommend that, for the present, recourse should be had to a labour test, giving in return relief in food sufficient for his and their subsistence, and, when the necessary arrangements can be made, cooked food ought to be preferred." — *Commissioners' Circular*, Feb. 27, 1848; NICHOLLS' *Scotch Poor-Law*, 221.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

the months of December, January, and February, great efforts had been made, by large subscriptions, to mitigate and relieve the general distress; and although several meetings of the unemployed had been held, yet everything at them had been conducted in the most regular manner, and they professed themselves deeply grateful for the relief they had received. No placards on the walls, or indications of excitement in the streets, appeared even after the news of the Revolution at Paris, which reached Glasgow on the 25th February, had been received. The police had received no information of any outbreak being designed. So little was any danger apprehended, that the Lord Provost was in London on official business, the Sheriff was on a visit in East-Lothian, and returned in the night on being sent for, and no defensive preparations had been made by the police, when suddenly, at 3 P.M. on 5th March, a body of five thousand men, who had assembled on the Green of Glasgow to discuss their prospects, moved to a neighbouring iron railing, which they tore up, with which they armed themselves, and, instantly marching into the city, commenced an attack on the principal shops, chiefly those of gunsmiths and jewellers, in the chief streets. So sudden was the onset, and so formidable the body of rioters, that the police, who were dispersed over their several beats, could make no head against them; and before the military arrived, which they did about five o'clock, and cleared the streets, under the orders of the magistrates, forty shops had been pillaged and gutted, and property to the value of £10,000 carried off or destroyed.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge; Ann. Reg. 1848, 36, 37; Chron.

128. Farther riots, and their suppression. March 6.

During the night, large bodies of troops arrived by railway from Edinburgh and Stirling, and next morning two thousand soldiers were collected in the city. The pensioners, with praiseworthy alacrity, mustered *of their own accord* when they heard of the tumult, and did good service on the following day; and great numbers of special constables were sworn in in all parts of the town. The

rioters, however, encouraged by their success on the preceding day, were noways daunted, and resolved on further outrages. At ten on the following morning, a large body, which soon swelled to above ten thousand persons, assembled on the Green, armed with muskets, swords, crowbars, and iron rails, which they had got possession of on the preceding day, and unanimously passed four resolutions, which were,—1. To march immediately to the neighbouring suburb of Calton, and turn out all the workers in the mills there, who, it was expected, would join them; 2. To go from thence to the gas-manufactory, and cut the pipes, so as to lay the city at night in darkness; 3. To march next to the jails, and liberate all the prisoners; and, 4. To break open the shops, set fire to and plunder the city. They immediately set out for the mills of Calton, which were in the immediate neighbourhood of the place of meeting, and on their way, when in the centre of that suburb, fell in with a detachment of fourteen pensioners in charge of a prisoner, under the command of Sergeant Smart, one of the officers of police.* To surround the detachment, and liberate the prisoner, was the work of an instant, and they were proceeding to close in with the soldiers, to wrest their arms from them, when Sergeant Smart authorised the men to defend their lives. The veterans immediately fired with steady aim, with such effect that two fell dead and three were wounded by the discharge. Upon this a yell of fury burst from the mob—"Blood for blood!" was heard on all sides; and before the men had time to reload, they were closing in with them, and beginning to wrest their muskets from their hands, when the acting chief magistrate of Glasgow† and Sheriff of Lanarkshire came up at the gallop at the head of sixty-six of the dragoons.[1] At the sight of the

[1] Glasgow Courier, March 8, 1848, and Glasgow Herald, March 9, 1848; Personal knowledge; Ann. Reg. 1848, 37, Chron.

* Now Chief Superintendent of the Glasgow police, and a most active and efficient commander.

† Robert Stewart, Esq. of Omoa and Murdiston, since Lord Provost of Glasgow.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

glittering helmets and drawn swords, the mob gave way, and the squadron arrived at the spot where the conflict had taken place. The sheriff then addressed them in a few words, saying, if the soldiers had been to blame, they would be punished, and if the people had been to blame, they would be punished in their room; but, in the mean time, they must leave it to the law, and return home. The mob saw they were mastered, gave three cheers, and dispersed. *

129. Good effects of this success.

The speedy suppression of this insurrection gave the greatest satisfaction to the Government and the country, as it was the first occasion on which the fidelity of the military and spirit of the people had been put to the test after the shock of the French Revolution had supervened in a time of such general and hazardous distress. It soon appeared of how much consequence it was that the rioters had been prevented from gaining success in the outset. It turned out that the Radicals in all the manufacturing towns of the west of Scotland—Paisley, Greenock, Port-Glasgow, Dumbarton, Airdrie, Kilmarnock, Hamilton, and Ayr—only awaited the signal of success in Glasgow

* The collision which terminated in this tragic result would have been prevented, had it not been for the same circumstance which occasioned the conflict of the military with the Cato Street conspirators in 1820, already recounted, chap. x., § 46, note. This was the different meaning which military men and civilians attach to the words, "ready to turn out at a moment's warning." The magistrates and sheriff had requested the commanding officer at the cavalry barracks "to have a squadron all day ready to turn out at a moment's warning;" and at ten o'clock, hearing of the meeting on the Green, they sent to say they were immediately required, and that the chief magistrate and sheriff would meet them in front of the court-house on the Green as soon as they could come. Thither they went accordingly; but the military did not come up till eleven, and when they did so, the party immediately set off at the gallop across the Green, but, in the interim, the collision took place, and the discharge was heard just as they were entering the streets of Calton. The delay was owing to the military understanding by the words, "ready to turn out at a moment's warning," to have the horses saddled, and the men armed and told off, but nothing more, which, of course, left the necessary operations of bringing out the horses, mounting, telling off by threes, and the like, to be done after the orders to move were received, which took half an hour. Nothing could exceed the promptitude, spirit, and humanity displayed by the whole military, both horse and foot, when they did arrive; and the Author, who witnessed it all, has great pleasure in bearing public testimony to the service they rendered to their country on this distressing occasion.

to have risen in insurrection, and commenced pillage; and as the whole military in the south of Scotland had been concentrated in Glasgow, it was not easy to say how the disturbances could have been suppressed. The conduct of the military at Glasgow, however, showed that they could be relied on; and the spirit evinced by the better classes in that city, during the crisis, when eleven thousand special constables tendered their services in twenty-four hours, demonstrated how sound the real strength of the nation was at heart. Numerous arrests by the police took place during the day immediately following the outbreak, and above a hundred were soon in custody, embracing all the ringleaders, of whom twenty-four were selected for trial, and afterwards sentenced, at the Spring Circuit, to various periods of transportation and imprisonment, from twenty-one years of the former to twelve months of the latter. It did not appear, from the evidence adduced at the trials, that there was any project of altering the frame of government in the minds of the leaders of the outbreak, but only a desire to turn the general suffering and strong excitement produced by the French Revolution to the best account in carrying out the projects entertained by a comparatively small body of desperadoes intent on general plunder.[1]

[1] Personal knowledge.

130. Commencement of the Chartist insurrection.

Disturbances, but of a much less formidable description, occurred in London, Manchester, and Edinburgh, soon after receipt of the intelligence of the French Revolution, but they were suppressed, without the interposition of the military, by the activity and efforts of the police. The truth was, that the Chartists and Radicals were not at the moment prepared to make the most of that great change; the convulsion fell on them, as it had done on all the world, wholly unexpectedly, and when in a state of entire want of preparation. But by degrees, they became sensible of the immense advantage which that astounding event gave them, when coinciding with the poignant and general suffering which existed both in Great Britain and the neighbouring island; and a general

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

revolutionary movement was organised in all the three kingdoms. With this view, and in order to furnish a pretext for the great assemblage in the metropolis, by whom it was to be effected, a Chartist petition was got up in all the manufacturing districts of England, which the journals of that party boasted had 5,000,000 of signatures affixed to it; although, as afterwards appeared, there were not half the number. It was sufficiently bulky to evince, however, the great pains which had been taken in getting it up, as well as the numbers who, in this period of general suffering, thought they would escape from their distresses by adopting Chartist principles; and great anxiety was felt in the country, and no small terror in the metropolis, when the period for presenting the petition arrived. The 10th April was the day fixed on by the Chartist leaders; and few more memorable are recorded in British history.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1848, 50; Chron.

131. Preparations of the Chartists. April 10.

The Chartist petition prayed the House of Commons only to adopt the six points of the Charter, which, as already mentioned, were annual parliaments, universal suffrage, vote by ballot, equal electoral districts, paid members of Parliament, and no property qualification. But the designs of the leaders went a great deal further, and aimed at nothing less than *achieving all their objects at once and by force.* For this purpose, it was proposed to assemble in great numbers on Kennington Common, on the south side of the Thames, and return from thence over Westminster and Blackfriars' Bridges; and, after uniting, to move in a dense mass up Parliament Street to the House of Commons, where the petition was to be presented by as many as could force their way in. In the terror of the moment, it was expected Government would not venture to make any resistance; and, if they did, it was confidently hoped that the troops would not second them in the attempt. Once in possession of the hall, a republic was to have been proclaimed, as in Paris, when the mob broke into the legislative body, and a Provisional Govern-

ment appointed. Deputies from all the Chartist associations in the kingdom were to be on the spot, besides all those from the metropolis and its vicinity in person; and it was confidently expected in all the manufacturing towns of the kingdom that the evening telegraph would bring intelligence of the overthrow of the Government.[1]

[1] 1 Ann. Reg. 1848, 51; Times, April 11.

132. Vigorous preparations in the Government.

In this eventful crisis, the conduct of Ministers was at once prudent and resolute, and they were admirably seconded by the spirit and courage of all the better classes in the metropolis. Some days before, a proclamation was issued setting forth the act 13 Charles II., which forbids "more than ten persons to repair to his Majesty, or either House of Parliament, upon pretence of presenting a petition, at any one time," and warning all persons "not to attend, or take part in, or be present at, any such assemblage or procession." At the same time it was announced that no opposition would be made to the constitutional right of meeting, nor to the proper presentation of the petition; but that any attempt to pass in return in an organised procession would be stopped by force of arms. As this was the point upon which it was expected the Chartists would insist, great preparations were made to resist it; and, under the personal direction and superintendence of the Duke of Wellington, they were at once of the most extensive and judicious description. Strong bodies of police were stationed at both ends of the bridges over the Thames, especially Blackfriars', Waterloo, and Westminster, by which it was expected a passage would be attempted from Kennington Common to the House of Commons; and in the immediate vicinity of the northern end of each, large military forces, with cannon, were stationed, concealed in the mean time in yards and houses, but ready to appear at a moment's warning, and entirely commanding, from the windows and roofs, the whole length of the bridges. Two regiments of the line were in reserve at Milbank Penitentiary; twelve hundred infantry at Deptford Dockyards; and thirty pieces of heavy field-artillery were ready at the

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

Tower, to be shipped instantly on board armed steamers lying at the quay, and conveyed to any part of the metropolis where they might be required. The Guards, horse and foot, were all under arms from three in the morning, stationed out of sight in Scotland Yard, the great area of the untenanted Rose Inn Yard, in Bridewell, at the Horse-Guards, Buckingham Palace, and other points of importance at the west end. The public offices in Parliament Street, Somerset House, and in the City, were filled with musketeers; and the Bank of England, besides being strongly occupied by infantry, had all its windows closed by loopholed barricades and sandbags, and some pieces of light artillery placed on the roof. In addition to this, no less than 170,000 special constables were organised in different parts of the metropolis, under the guidance of the first in rank, and the highest in station, by whom they had been previously exercised. In one detachment, commanded by the Earl of Eglinton, appeared as a private a man bearing a name destined to future immortality, PRINCE LOUIS NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE. Many officers of rank hastened to the Horse-Guards to tender their services to their old chief on this crisis, among whom was the Marquess of Londonderry, who, though in infirm health and advanced years, was there at daybreak, to bring the aid of a chivalrous heart and experienced eye to the service of his country. The Duke was never absent from his post during either the preceding night or the whole day. The Queen, with the characteristic courage of her nature and race, was most anxious to have remained and faced the danger in person; but the Ministers justly thought the chance was too hazardous, and she was prevailed on, much against her will, to remove, with Prince Albert and family, two days before the 10th, to Osborne House, in the Isle of Wight.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1848, 51, 52; Times, April 11, 1848; Morning Post, April 11, 1848; Personal knowledge.

When the eventful day arrived, nothing remarkable was observed in the metropolis except an unusual stillness and vacancy in the streets. Not a soldier was to be seen; few

policemen were visible; the gentlemen and better classes were all at their rallying-points, anxiously waiting orders to act. About ten the different processions, with banners and bands of music, began to appear in their march to Kennington Common. Six thousand in great pomp passed London Bridge; and seventeen hundred marched with the National Convention, *en grande tenue*, from its hall in John Street, Fitzroy Square, across Blackfriars' Bridge, to the place of meeting. At its head was a great car, with the leaders, Feargus O'Connor and Ernest Jones, in the front rank, and the whole Convention, with the reporters, in the same vehicle. Banners with appropriate Chartist devices followed, one bearing the singular words, "*And M. Guizot laughed immoderately.*" When they reached the Common, it appeared a solid mass of human heads, extending over its whole surface. The numbers were variously estimated at from 15,000 to 150,000. The most probable account was, that they were about 50,000. When the car stopped in the middle of the crowd, a police inspector, of gigantic figure, but a mild expression, made his way through the crowd, and, addressing Mr Feargus O'Connor and Mr M'Grath, informed them that Mr Inspector Mayne wished to speak to them near the Home Tavern. Thither they went, accordingly, preceded by the huge policeman, and they were informed by Mr Mayne that no hindrance would be given to the people meeting, and passing any resolutions they thought fit; but that any attempt to pass the bridges in procession, on their return back, would be resisted. Mr O'Connor engaged that the meeting should occasion no breach of the peace, and gave his hand in pledge of his sincerity to the inspector. He then returned to the car, and informed the Convention of what had taken place. This check proved fatal to the whole enterprise. A violent altercation took place on the car—some insisting that they should return in procession, and force their way through; others, that they should yield obedience to the law, and present the petition by a

133. Defeat of the Chartists.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

few persons only. Ultimately good sense and a lingering feeling of duty prevailed, and it was agreed to send the petition quietly to the House of Commons, which was consigned to the humble conveyance of three cabs. The meeting then broke up in great disorder, but, to their honour be it spoken, without any violence or breach of the peace being attempted. Some small bodies attempted to force their way *en masse* over the bridges, but were quickly repulsed by the dense masses of police, headed by stalwart steady men, who guarded their entrance. After a short struggle this was no longer contended for, and the police then allowed small bodies of not more than ten each to pass. Soon after three o'clock the great mass of the crowd had passed away, and by seven everything was quiet in the vast metropolis.[1]

[1] Times, April 11, 1848; Morning Post, April 11, 1848; Ann. Reg. 1848, 53, Chron.

134. Abortive attempt at insurrection in Glasgow.

In the provinces, on this eventful day, the Chartist leaders were anxiously waiting for intelligence from the capital before they commenced operations. In Glasgow, though little of importance occurred in event, much was inchoated of moment, as indicating, even more clearly than in the metropolis, what the real design of the Chartists had been. When daylight broke, the walls of the houses in that city were found to be covered by a treasonable placard, which had been extensively posted during the night, calling on the people, *on receipt of the news from London*, "to rise in their thousands and tens of thousands, and put an end to the vile government of the oligarchy, which had so long oppressed the country." At the same time, another placard was distributed to every soldier who was in the streets, and thrown in great numbers over the gate into the barrack-yard, offering a pension for life of £10 to every man, and four acres of ground, who should leave his colours and join the forces of the insurgents. Not a man did so. So confident were the authors of these compositions, however, of the approaching success of the movement, that the printers' names were at both placards. They were immediately arrested by the

Sheriff of Lanarkshire, and committed for trial, on a charge of high treason and sedition. Great anxiety prevailed during the day in the city; scarcely any work was done; the streets were crowded by anxious groups, and the military, special constables, and police were at their posts, ready to act at a moment's warning, when at nine at night the telegraph brought the intelligence of the failure in London. This instantly struck terror into the one party, as much as it diffused satisfaction amongst the other. The Sheriff announced the joyful intelligence, amidst loud cheers, at the Royal Exchange and the Athenæum, and all anxiety was immediately at an end. The persons committed were soon after liberated by directions of the Lord-Advocate, on their own recognisances to keep the peace, Government having judged, and probably wisely, that the attempt at insurrection having been put down, it would be unwise to sully the victory by unnecessary severity, and that the best possible termination of rebellion is defeat without scaffolds.[1]

[1] Glasgow Courier, April 12, 1848; Personal knowledge.

135. Detection of the frauds in the Chartist petition.

The finishing-stroke was put to this grand Chartist demonstration, by the scrutiny which the petition underwent by order of the House of Commons. From that it appeared, that so far from having 5,706,000 names appended to it, as was asserted by Mr Feargus O'Connor, it had only 1,975,490; and a considerable proportion of them were evidently fabrications or impositions. Thus, Prince Albert's name, her Majesty's, Lord John Russell's, Sir R. Peel's, were found to be written down *several times*, and Colonel Sibthorpe's *twelve*, and the Duke of Wellington's *thirty times*. Great part of the apparent signatures turned out to be obscene words, cant phrases, or low ribaldry, and so far from weighing 5 tons as asserted, it weighed just 5 cwt. This discovery turned the whole thing into ridicule; the best possible termination for a serious political movement.[2] *

[2] Ann. Reg. 1848, 53, 54, Chron.; Report of Committee, April 13, 1848; Parl. Deb. xcviii. 148, 150.

* A curious confirmation of the extraordinary falsification of names which had taken place in the preparation of the Chartist petition, was about the same

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

136. Immense sensation this produced on the Continent.

The bloodless and complete suppression of the Chartist insurrection excited an immense sensation on the Continent, the more especially as it occurred at a time when the thrones of Austria, Prussia, and many other states, were reeling under the shock produced by the French Revolution. It went far to restore the credit of representative institutions, which their repeated failures in France, Spain, Piedmont, Naples, and so many other countries, had seriously impaired. Queen Victoria put down a formidable and organised attempt at revolution, without firing a shot, or shedding one drop of blood, either in the field or on the scaffold, relying almost entirely on the "unbought loyalty" of her subjects, at a time when the country was labouring under severe and unparalleled suffering; when the great military monarchies on the Continent, afflicted with no such misfortunes, had sought protection in vain from their numerous and highly-disciplined armed bands. There was enough here to arrest the attention of the most inconsiderate, and rivet the thoughts of the most contemplative. It will for ever stand forth as one of the most honourable events in British—not the least memorable in the world's history. Whether it arose from the innate strength of representative institutions, when fully and long established, to withstand the severest internal shocks, or from the peculiar adaptation of such institutions to the Anglo-

time obtained at Glasgow. The Sheriff there received information from two of the persons who had been engaged in its concoction, in addition to the real signatures obtained, that the way they proceeded about it in that city was this:—Six persons sat down, three on each side of a high mercantile desk. They were furnished with pens of various ages and degrees of softness, and several inkstands of different colours. Thus equipped, they proceeded to write down the names they found in several *old Directories* which they had on the table, and when one wrote a name, he immediately handed over the paper to his fellow-labourer opposite, who wrote the next name with a different ink and different kind of pen, and thus, as six persons were engaged, no identity of handwriting was perceptible. The greatest difficulty, the informants said, was to get various names, as the signatures from Glasgow soon outstripped the Directories, and when this difficulty was experienced, they went out into the streets, *observed the signs, and wrote them down*, giving a different street to each name from the one where it really appeared.

Saxon race and character, is a question upon which the world is as yet too young to authorise a decided opinion. But this much may at least be asserted, that even those most strongly impressed with the *ultimate* danger of recent changes to the fortunes of the country, must rejoice that they had been brought about *before* this great trial of the strength of the constitution occurred, and admit their importance in bringing it through the crisis. Probably the most ardent admirer of representative government, and the most devout believer in the loyalty and stability of the British character, will hesitate to say that the result would have been the same if the reform transports of 1832, and the organised agitation of 1845, had been run into the universal suffering of 1848, and been contemporaneous with the world-felt shock of the French Revolution.

137. Renewed agitation by the Chartists, and its suppression, and their trials. May 29, 31.

Although every person of sense in the British empire and Europe saw that the Chartist insurrection had received its death-blow on the 10th of April, yet such was the obduracy and infatuation of the leaders, that they continued for some time longer a harassing though unavailing agitation in the metropolis. In the end of May, gatherings to the number of 8000 and 10,000, assembled in Clerkenwell Green or Finsbury Square, almost every night, and began marching in military array through the streets as far as the Strand, Leicester and Trafalgar Squares, where they had rude encounters with large bodies of the police, by whom, though not without some difficulty, they were dispersed. At this period, the meetings in London in the close of the evening were so frequent that a constant discharge of firearms was heard, not from the military, but the marching crowds, to keep up excitement; a state of things which kept the capital in constant alarm, from an apprehension that it arose, although it was not the case, from the military. The Chartists, as often occurs, mistook the leniency of Government for timidity; they thought their agitation might

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

be continued for ever without legal obstruction or punishment. At length the patience of Ministers was worn out, and deeming the public mind sufficiently prepared to render convictions probable, several arrests took place, particularly of Ernest John Jones, Fusseli, J. Williams, A. Sharpe, and T. Vernon. They were found guilty of

June 17.

sedition, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. At the same time, the meetings, whenever attempted, were dispersed by the police. The final blow, however, was struck in London when Cuffey and twenty-five of the most desperate Chartist leaders were captured by 300

Aug. 13.

armed police in the Angel Tavern, Blackfriars, in whose possession large quantities of daggers, spears, swords, pistols, and ball-cartridges were found. Their trials came on soon after, and then the magnitude and extent of the conspiracy were fully revealed. It appeared that they had established a "war committee," and intended to barricade the streets, plunder the shops, set fire to St Paul's, and rouse the whole population of the metropolis, whom they expected to join them in overturning the Government. They were all convicted, and the leaders transported for life; the inferior culprits to various penalties, varying from fourteen years' transportation to six months' imprisonment, while many were allowed to escape on entering into their own recognisances to keep the peace.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1848, 85, 121, 122; Chron.

138. Preparations for a rebellion in Ireland. July 1848.

It is a curious circumstance, and fortunate for Great Britain, that although the Irish, for above half a century, have been always disposed to, and sometimes actually engaged in, revolt, they have never thought of combining their movements with those of the discontented on this side of the Channel. It would seem that the antipathy of the Celt to the Saxon is so strong that they will not combine with him even for objects of common interest. So it proved on the present occasion. Hardly were the Chartist disturbances put down in Great Britain than it was rumoured that a rebellion, however desperate its

hopes, was in preparation in Ireland. The *Nation* and *Irish Felon*, the chief organs of the revolutionists in that country, early in July, upon the conviction of John Mitchell, a noted leader in Dublin, threw off the mask, and openly counselled immediate insurrection. In these circumstances, the measures of Government were prompt and decided, and such as, when supported by a people generally loyal, seldom fail of success. The Duke of Wellington, with his usual foresight, had been long making preparations for a serious conflict. With this view he had withdrawn the garrison from a number of the weak or distant police and military stations, and thereby strengthened the garrisons of those more important points which it had been deemed advisable to defend. They had been loopholed in every direction, and strongly barricaded in the entrances, so as to be capable of resisting any attack by rebels without artillery. Large bodies of troops were marched into the counties in the south and west, where the rising was expected, and several war-steamers, under Sir Charles Napier, cruised round the south coast, ready to carry succour to any point which might be menaced. Limerick was overawed by the "Rhadamanthus" with her guns enfilading the principal streets, and Cork by a flotilla of armed steamers. On the 26th July the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, to be hereafter noticed, arrived in Dublin, and warrants were immediately despatched for the arrest of Mr Smith O'Brien, Mr Meagher, and a dozen other club leaders. At the same time a proclamation was issued, declaring the clubs illegal, and requiring them forthwith to dissolve; the most rigid scrutiny took place of the persons licensed to bear arms; and the counties of Kerry, Galway, Wexford, Carlow, Queen's, Kildare, Lowth, Westmeath, Cavan, and great numbers of baronies in other counties, were proclaimed by the Lord-Lieutenant, under the Crime and Outrage Act, with a view to a general disarmament of the inhabitants.[1] At the same time a proclamation was issued,

July 26.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1848, 93, 94, Chron. —95 Hist.

CHAP. XLIII.

offering £500 for the apprehension of Smith O'Brien, and £300 for that of either Meagher, Dillon, or Dohony.

1848.

139. Total defeat of the rebellion.

Those decisive measures brought matters to a crisis. The editor of the *Nation* fled from Dublin, numerous arrests took place, and the insurgents in the south openly assembled in arms, and were reviewed near Ballingarry by Mr S. O'Brien. It was the intention of Government to have allowed the rebels to assemble in considerable numbers without molestation, and meanwhile collect the military on all sides, who, by a converging movement, might surround them, and terminate the contest in a day, it was hoped, with little bloodshed. The troops, fifteen hundred in number, were already in motion, under the experienced guidance of General Macdonald, to effect this object, when an accidental circumstance caused the whole designs of the conspirators to fail, and turned them into ridicule. Having collected some thousand insurgents, O'Brien, after vain attempts to get some of the police who bravely refused to surrender their arms to join his party, advanced on the 28th towards Ballingarry. On their way they met a body of police fifty strong, under Inspector Trant, who had marched out to meet them. Finding himself surrounded by a body of two thousand insurgents, Trant retreated to a slated house occupied by one Widow Cormack, where he resolved, with his brave followers, to defend himself to the last extremity. The house was soon surrounded by the rebels—above two thousand strong—and O'Brien in vain tried to induce the commander to surrender and join his force to those of the insurgents. Finding him proof alike against promises and threats, he had recourse to force of arms; but here the superiority of the police—as fine and steady a body of men as any in the world—was at once apparent. Before the firing had lasted many minutes, two of the insurgents were shot dead, and three wounded in the cabbage-garden round the house, while none of the garrison were injured. Disconcerted by this untoward

July 28.

result, and still more by the proved fidelity of the armed police, upon whose defection he mainly relied, O'Brien drew off his forces, and fell back in deep dejection. He himself soon after fled, and Inspector Cox having come up next day to the support of Trant with a larger police force, the insurgents dispersed. The misguided leader was arrested some days after at Thurles in disguise when at the railway station, setting out for Limerick, and committed for trial.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1848, 95, 96; Trial of O'Brien, Sept. 28, 1848; Ibid. 389—State Trials.

140. Trial of O'Brien, and revealing of the designs of the conspirators. Sept. 28.

His trial, along with M'Manus, Orchard, Tighe, and O'Donnell, took place in the end of September, and was conducted with the greatest temper and ability, both at the bar and on the bench. Chief-Justice Doherty presided; the Attorney-General led the prosecution; and Mr Whiteside lent the aid of his great talents and eloquence to the accused. Never was a judicial proceeding conducted with more impartiality and decorum, and never was guilt more clearly brought home to the accused. A letter from his associate Duffy to O'Brien, found on the latter's person, clearly revealed the extent and dangerous nature of the conspiracy, and the influence which the revolution in France and the example of Lafayette had had in producing it, to which the flattery of the writer compared his present position.* The attack on

* "My dear Sir,—I am glad to learn that you are about to commence a series of meetings in Munster. There is no half-way house for you. You will be the head of the movement, loyally obeyed, and the revolution will be conducted with order and clemency; or the mere anarchists will prevail with the people, *and our revolution will be a bloody chaos. You have at present Lafayette's place, so graphically painted by Lamartine, and, I believe, have fallen into Lafayette's error*—that of not using it to all its extent, and in all its resources. I am perfectly well aware that you don't desire to lead or influence others; but I believe with Lamartine, that that feeling, which is a high personal and civic virtue, is a vice in revolutions. One might as well, I think, not want to influence a man who was going to walk on thawing ice, or to cross a fordless river, as not to desire to keep men right in a political struggle, and to do it with might and main. If I were Smith O'Brien, I would strike out in my own mind, or with such counsel as I valued, *a definite course for the revolution*, and labour incessantly to develop it in that way. For example, your project of obtaining signatures to the roll of the *National Guard*, and when a sufficient number were produced, and not sooner, *calling the Council of Three Hundred*, was one I entirely relied upon; but it has been permitted to fall into disuse,

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

Widow Cormack's house, under the immediate direction of O'Brien, was proved beyond dispute, as well as the unsuccessful attempts made to seduce the police from their allegiance. After a long trial, in which everything that legal ability and eloquence could suggest was exhausted in his defence, he was found guilty, along with all his fellow-prisoners, though they were all recommended to mercy, and they all, along with Meagher, who was tried at Dublin by Chief-Justice Blackmore, received sentence of death. Their conduct on receiving sentence was at once courageous and dignified, and only awakened the most poignant regret that men capable, at such a moment, of uttering such sentiments, should have been so far misled by patriotic and generous feelings as to have engaged in an enterprise which, if successful, could have led only to an aggravation of the misery of their country, and which could the less be forgiven, that at the very moment when they were uttered, five hundred thousand Irishmen, with their families, were daily fed by British bounty.* The sentence of death was wisely and humanely

and would scarcely be revived now. The clubs, however, might take the place of the National Guard, and the proposal in your letter on ——— of a definite number of clubs being formed, would just suit as well if it were vigorously and systematically carried out, each day adding an item to it, and all the men we could influence employed upon it.

(Signed) "C. G. DUFFY."

—*Ann. Reg.* 1848, 396, 397—*State Trials.*

* O'Brien, on being asked whether he had any reason to state why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, said with a loud and firm voice: "My lords, it was not my intention to have entered into any vindication of my conduct, however much I might have desired to have availed myself of this opportunity of doing so. I am perfectly satisfied with the consciousness that I have performed my duty to my country—that I have only done that which, in my opinion, it was the duty of every Irishman to have done. And I am now prepared to abide the consequence of having performed my duty to my native land. Proceed with your sentence."

Meagher said: "This sentence, my lords, which you are about to pronounce, will be remembered by my countrymen as the severe and solemn attestation of my rectitude and truth. With my country I leave my memory, my sentiments, my acts, proudly feeling that they require no vindication from me this day. On this spot, where the shadows of death surround me, and from which I see my early grave in an unconsecrated soil is ready to receive me—even here the hope which beckoned me on to embark upon the perilous sea

afterwards commuted into transportation for life; and after a residence abroad of eight years, they were all, excepting those who had broken their parole, restored to their country by the general amnesty proclaimed on the glorious termination of the Russian war. Thus was this formidable convulsion, which, spreading from France, overturned the monarchies of Austria and Prussia, and shook to its foundations every government in Europe, suppressed in Great Britain without shedding one drop of blood on the scaffold.[1]

[1] O'Brien's Trial, Sept. 28, 1848; Ann. Reg. 1848, 394, 447.

Such was the terrible monetary crisis of 1847 in Great Britain—the most disastrous and widespread of which there is any record in the annals of mankind. Its

upon which I have been wrecked, still consoles, animates, enraptures me. I do not despair of my old country; I do not despair of her peace, her liberty, her glory. To lift up this isle, to make her a benefactor to humanity instead of being what she is—the meanest beggar in the world—to restore her ancient constitution and her native powers,—this has been my ambition, and this has been my crime. Judged thus, the treason of which I have been convicted loses all guilt, has been sanctified as a duty, and will be ennobled as a sacrifice. To my country I offer the only sacrifice I can now give—the life of a young heart, and with it the hopes, the honours, the endearments of a happy and an honourable home. Pronounce then, my lords, the sentence the law directs, and I shall be prepared to hear it, and, I trust, to meet its execution, and to appear with a light heart before a higher tribunal."

M'Manus said: "Standing in this dock, and about to ascend the scaffold, it may be to-morrow, I wish to put this on record, that in no part of my proceedings have I been actuated by animosity against Englishmen, among whom I have spent some of the happiest days of my life, and of the most prosperous. In nothing I have done have I been influenced by enmity to Englishmen individually, whatever I may have felt of the injustice of English rule in this island. It is not for having loved England less, but for having loved Ireland more, that I now stand before you."—*Irish State Trials*, 1848; *Ann. Reg.* 1848, 449, 470, 472—*State Trials*.

These are noble thoughts, couched in noble language, which will speak to the hearts of the right-hearted and the generous in every future age. They only make us the more regret, that men actuated by such elevated sentiments should be so far misled by national or political passion as to pursue the crime which experience has proved was best calculated to render impossible the consummation they so ardently desired and eloquently expressed. But that only renders it the more the object of devout thankfulness that the prevalence of humane and just ideas has now so far modified the barbarity of former times as to have almost abolished practically the punishment of death in political offences; a step, it is to be hoped, to the really just rule of treating prisoners, in civil conflicts, on the same footing as those taken in the military conflict of nations.

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

141. Immense effects of the monetary crisis of 1847.

effects, not merely in the British empire, but in both hemispheres, have been in the highest degree important, and in no instance has the agency of supreme wisdom in educing lasting good out of transitory evil been more conspicuous. Beyond all question, it was mainly instrumental in bringing to a crisis the general discontent in France, and overturning the corrupt government of Louis Philippe; the suspension of credit, want of employment, and stagnation of industry among the workmen of Paris, which proved fatal to the Orleans dynasty, had its origin in the Bank Charter Act of London. It perpetuated through a course of years the misery first induced by the famine in Ireland; and gave rise to the prodigious and long-continued exodus of the Irish people, which has ended in transferring two millions of Celts from the shores of the Emerald Isle to the Transatlantic wilds. It has given comparative security and unanimity to the British empire, by extracting the thorn which had so long festered in its side, implanted by Irish suffering and envenomed by sacerdotal ambition. It has led to the overthrow of the monarchies of Austria and Prussia, and, by bringing down the reserve of legitimacy in the shape of the Russian battalions to the Hungarian plains, it subverted for a time the balance of power in Europe, impelled Nicholas into the career of Oriental ambition, and ultimately arranged the forces of the West against those of the East on the shores of the Crimea. Finally, it produced in the far West and South-east effects still more lasting and important; for by the money pressure it produced in America, it forced the United States into foreign aggression as the means of paying their domestic debts, transferred California from the lazy hands of the Spaniards, by whom its treasures had lain undiscovered for three hundred years, into the active grasp of the Anglo-Saxons; revealed to British enterprise, sent into exile by domestic suffering, the hidden treasures of Australia; and gave a permanent and beneficial impulse to the

industry of the whole world, by providing a currency adequate to its increasing numbers and transactions in the treasures it brought to light in both hemispheres.

142. Lesson which it taught the British people.

If the ultimate effects of this great convulsion have been thus widespread and momentous, not less important is the lesson it has taught the British people as to the results of the new system on which they had adventured, and which in the very outset had produced such astonishing consequences. The years 1847 and 1848 are peculiarly worthy of attention to the student of British history, for they brought to light the dreadful perils of the *combination of Free Trade with a Fettered Currency* in aggravating distress, as the years 1845 and 1846 had demonstrated the dangers of the monetary system *in inflaming speculation.* It is doubtful which is in the end the most perilous, or impels a nation most certainly to the brink of ruin. The mode in which these double consecutive results have taken place is now perfectly apparent, and they both flow from one cause—viz. the establishment of a currency based entirely upon the retention of gold, coupled with a commercial system which rendered that retention impossible. This was the root of the evil; the Irish famine was an accidental circumstance, which brought the danger earlier to light, and in a more fearful form, than would otherwise have occurred, but was by no means instrumental in producing it.

143. The monetary crisis was owing to Free Trade and a Fettered Currency.

That a failure to the extent of nearly a half in the staple food of a people numbering eight millions must of itself produce a frightful amount of suffering among the classes affected by it, is sufficiently apparent; and Sir R. Peel's monetary system is nowâys chargeable with that distress. But it is chargeable, and exclusively so, with the *communication of the distress from the Irish peasantry to the commercial classes of Great Britain,* and the general collapse of credit which terminated in the suspension of the Bank Charter Act in October 1847. There is a very obvious connection between the failure of a staple

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

kind of food and the distress, or even famine, of the people who live on it; but there is no natural connection between such failure and a monetary crisis in a neighbouring country, accompanied with general ruin to the trading classes, and commercial embarrassment and bankruptcy for a course of years. The agricultural produce destroyed by the potato-rot in Ireland was said to be worth £16,000,000—call it £20,000,000 in the whole empire, which is probably above the mark. That is only *a fifteenth* part of the entire agricultural produce of the empire, estimated at that period at £300,000,000—a much less deficiency, *upon the whole*, than an ordinary bad harvest produces, attended with no extraordinary results. Whatever severity of local distress, therefore, such a deficiency might produce, it cannot be considered as having been, if it had stood alone, the cause of the dreadful *commercial* suffering in Great Britain. On the contrary, by raising the prices of subsistence and stimulating commerce, it should rather have tended to augment mercantile profits, and enhance mercantile enterprise in the neighbouring island. But the moment a monetary system is established, on a basis which renders the currency and advances by bankers exclusively dependent on the gold in the Bank's coffers, any adventitious circumstance which occasions an unusual drain upon those coffers, which a great importation of food invariably does, produces a contraction of advances, a rise of interest, a destruction of credit, from which it requires a long course of years for any nation, even the most prosperous, to recover.

144. Dangers of Free Trade and a Fettered Currency.

But this is not all. The combination of Free Trade with a gold-dependent currency, not only necessarily renders any adventitious cause, which occasions a great export of gold, the forerunner of commercial embarrassment and ruin, but it perpetually keeps the nation on the verge of such a catastrophe. It augments fearfully the chance of its occurrence, more especially in an old, opulent, and luxurious State. As such a community can bring into

the market the fruits of the accumulated industry of several centuries, while the poor States from which it purchases subsistence can only bring the fruits of two or three years, the *means of consumption of the one infinitely exceed those of the other.* Thence the trade between them necessarily runs into a huge excess of imports over exports, the balance of which, of course, must be paid in cash. This, accordingly, has taken place in the most remarkable manner in the trade of Great Britain with all the nations from whence she imports largely rude produce, and which has terminated in a settled balance of imports over exports of from £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 a-year.*

Great as this balance is, it would be of comparatively little importance if the nation possessed a currency, and could maintain its credit independent of the holding of its gold. But under a system where credit is rendered entirely dependent on such retention, and the greatest pos-

* In proof of this, it is sufficient to refer to the comparative imports and exports of Great Britain since 1854, during which period, as the *real* value of the imports as well as the exports, and not, as formerly, their official value, has been taken, the comparison can be made and the balance struck with perfect accuracy. They have stood thus :—

Years.	Imports—Real Value.	Exports—Real Value.		Total British, Colonial, and Foreign.	Balance against Great Britain.
		British and Irish.	Colonial and Foreign.		
1854	£152,389,053	£97,184,726	£18,636,366	£115,821,092	£36,567,961
1855	143,542,851	95,688,085	21,003,215	116,891,300	26,651,551
1856	172,654,823	115,890,857	23,425,365	132,316,222	33,238,601

—*Stat. Abstract*, 1842-1856, pp. 12, 19, 24.

When the magnitude of the balance of thirty or forty millions a-year requiring to be paid in cash is considered, it will cease to be a matter of surprise that during the latter year (1856) the bullion in the Bank never exceeded £11,000,000, seldom £10,000,000, and that bank discounts were almost constantly at 6 or 7 per cent. Great as the supplies were, exceeding £30,000,000 annually, then obtained from the gold regions, they were unable to supply the drain required to pay this adverse balance of trade, or avert the commercial distress which, under our present monetary system, it necessarily induced. The entire mercantile body have, during the last year, been paying an extra property-tax of 3½ per cent on THEIR ENDANGERED CAPITAL, as their contribution toward the maintenance of the existing Bank Charter Act.

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

145. Which keeps the nation constantly on the verge of a monetary crisis.

sible amount of disposable capital cannot otherwise maintain it, a course of trade which causes thirty or forty millions of specie, or bills payable in specie, annually to leave the country to make up the balance of trade with foreign States, must keep it constantly on the verge of disaster. No amount of prudence or foresight, on the part of those engaged in commerce, can prevent the recurrence of the most serious calamities, because they may any moment be induced by causes which they can neither foresee nor prevent. Three weeks' rain in Great Britain in August, a cry for gold to ruin the banks in the United States, great railway undertakings abroad, a revolution in France, a war on the Continent, any considerable increase in the export of metallic treasures to the East—anything, in short, which causes an unusual drain of the precious metals in London, must at once induce a monetary crisis in the British Islands, suspend advances, and ruin all traders and persons engaged in business, who do not enjoy the highest credit, or possess the advantage of large realised capital.* The nation, under such a system, is like a person walking in the dark on the edge of a precipice; any false step or external blast may at once precipitate him into the abyss.

146. A great increase in the supply of gold postpones, but does not avert this danger.

A great increase in the supply of the precious metals for the use of the globe, such as has occurred since 1852, from the discovery of the rich gold-fields of California and Australia, which raised the annual produce of the mines from eight or ten to thirty-six millions a-year, may for a time avert, but it cannot permanently remove, this danger. When gold is every week pouring in immense quantities into the vaults of the Bank of England, and the drain arising from the balance of trade is met by a never-ceasing influx from the gold regions, credit may for a considerable period be maintained, and commerce be prosperous, because a sufficient stock of gold may be retained notwithstanding that drain. But it is obvious that this auspicious state of things cannot be of long

endurance, and that ere long the old risk must reappear, possibly under still more threatening circumstances. The reason is obvious. The rise of prices consequent on such an increased influx of the precious metals is, or must soon become, *universal over the world;* consequently the issue of the precious metals to pay the balance of trade must be augmented *in as great a proportion as the influx is increased.* What will it avail the nation that the supply of gold and silver to the Bank of England is increased in a year from ten to thirty millions, if as fast as it flows in it is drawn out to meet the increased balance of trade arising from the enhanced price of every species of imported commodity? Accordingly, at the moment when these lines are written (Nov. 17, 1856), the stock of gold in both departments of the Bank of England is reduced to £9,540,000, interest is 7 per cent, credit is almost suspended, and two more adverse weeks, such as the two last, would render a supension of the Bank Charter Act indispensable. And all that in the face of an annual influx of the precious metals to the extent of between thirty to forty millions a-year; and an affluence of capital in the British Islands unequalled in the history of the world.*

* This state of things has extorted the following just observations from the ablest organ of the united bullion and Free-trade systems: "A uniform price of 7 per cent for the use of money is a state of things which, though happily unintelligible to many of our readers, is equivalent in its effects to a great national disaster. Famine, pest, earthquake, floods, conflagrations, and shipwreck, inflict local or personal injury. A very high rate of interest in a country where it is unusual, will produce *a greater amount of inconvenience than any one of them.* It affects the whole atmosphere of trade, and particularly of that which is not strictly trade, but of a more speculative character, such as transactions in funds and shares.

"The particular hardship just now—not, however, for the first time alleged—is, that there is *no speculation of an unusual character;* scarcely a railway, or a loan, or any enterprise, except now and then the proposition of a branch railway, very reasonable in its object and modest in its demands. There are very few failures, and these are such as either do not much affect the mercantile world, or are only attended with temporary inconvenience. Nevertheless, good mercantile houses find they have to pay for usual accommodation such rates as *devour all their profits.* It used to be thought a divine retribution that in one way or another the gold of America passed through Spain with marvellous rapidity, in spite of the laws to arrest its progress. We find the

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

147. Argument on the other side as to the export of gold.

It is often said that this great export of the precious metals, which is the invariable result of Free Trade, is of no consequence, because the gold or silver, being valuable commodities, could not have come to this country but in exchange for something of equal value; and therefore a great import of gold implies a proportionally great export of manufactures to purchase it. But the answer to this is threefold and decisive. First, it is by its derangement of a currency, resting on the retention of the precious metals, that this exportation to any great extent becomes so

same in our case. *Ecce signum.* It is assumed as a matter of course that the £700,000 expected by the James Baines is only to touch us on its way to France. Again, we *are importing corn largely, and at a high price.* This must be paid for, and doubtless *a good deal is paid for in gold.* These are considerations for those who profess themselves surprised at the present excessive demand for money, and insufficient supply, in the face of *our immense colonial importation,* and a sort of pause from the speculations of the last dozen years. Happily we have seen the worst of them all. The war is over, the diggings are well under way, and we have done our part in the affair, and year by year our corn importation is settling into a regular trade."—*Times,* Nov. 15, 1856."

Again, in April 1857, the same alarming symptoms reappeared in a still more serious form, for the drain of the precious metals to the Continent and the East then became so great, that notwithstanding weekly supplies from the gold regions of £700,000 or £800,000, the bullion in both departments of the Bank of England fell to £9,064,000, of which only £747,000 was in the banking department! This is lower than it had been since 25th October 1847, when it was down at £8,400,000. On this subject the *Times* of April 17, 1857, makes the following remarks: "The perplexities of the money-market seem greater than ever. For many months persons have been looking to the present period as that at which some turn in the unfavourable course of our bullion balances might be expected, and instead we have the Bank reverting to almost its highest rate of discount, while its stock of gold is *reduced to a point lower than at any time in the last ten years.* The question is, can this sudden increase of pressure be attributed to temporary causes, or is it only a regular stage of a condition which has already existed for two or three years, and must now be considered permanent? On the favourable side we have the fact that, looking at the course of a great number of years, the rate of discount in England averages about 4 per cent, and that consequently any advance beyond this point has always hitherto been followed by a proportionate reaction; next, that the trade of the country has for the last twenty-seven months been of unprecedented magnitude, and healthy in nearly every department; next, that, notwithstanding the profits thus made, there has been an *unusual abstinence from speculative commitments, either at home or abroad;* and, finally, that the agricultural returns of the kingdom have for the last two years, to say the least, been *perfectly satisfactory.* With a profitable export business, an economical expenditure, and a good yield of home produce, the circumstance that the balance of cash payments between ourselves and the rest of the world is uninterruptedly against us, seems an extraordinary anomaly. Last year the conviction that our position in these

serious a matter. If the nation possessed a currency adequate to its necessities, and yet duly limited, *independent of gold*, that metal might all go away without inducing a greater evil than the efflux of lead or iron. The peril of a great export of gold to pay an adverse balance of trade, therefore, is noways lessened, even though the whole of it had come in to pay the price of manufactures exported. In the next place, great part of the gold which finds its way to the Bank of England is not brought to the British shores in payment of any manufactures or British pro-

respects could lead only to a rapid improvement in our money-market, was so strong, that the most persevering warnings were necessary to prevent the public from at once running wildly into every description of foreign adventure; and their surprise, therefore, may well be great, when after twelve months' continuance of such prosperity, they find themselves increasingly in debt to other nations. The chief explanation offered is, that the great commercial development consequent upon the gold discoveries and other causes has created a demand for capital beyond all former experience: This however, *is little better than a superficial assumption.* There has been no unexpected addition to the population of the world, nor any conversion of nations from barbarism to civilisation, to warrant the belief that our mercantile transactions have been suddenly forced to such magnitude that our entire yearly gains are insufficient to supply the extra capital requisite for carrying them on. The Australian discoveries are now six years old; the population of those colonies is still insignificant; a large portion of them continue their old avocations of producing wool and tallow, and the occupation of the remainder, who are engaged in gold-finding, can have no material effect either in increasing or diminishing the wealth of the world, or in leading to an alteration of the rate of interest, however extraordinary may be its influence on the other relations of property. It is true that our exports last year were £20,000,000 above any recent average, and that an augmentation is still taking place; but commercial men know with what a slight increase of actual money an improved trade to this extent may, in times when credit is perfectly sound, be carried on. A large part of the addition, moreover, is merely consequent upon higher prices, and, although these involve a proportionate increase in the movements of capital, their effects are in most cases balanced in the course of a few months; since if we have to pay more for our raw material, we have also more to receive for our manufactured goods, and *the ultimate bullion balances in settlement can therefore in no way be affected.* Hence the doctrine that the spread of commerce will account for the phenomena now in progress must be discarded as unsatisfactory, or, at all events, insufficient."

It is not surprising that the able writers in the *Times* find a difficulty in explaining the phenomenon, which, on their principles, is perfectly unaccountable. But the simple explanation of it is, that in the year 1856 the imports were, as already shown, £33,238,000 over the exports, and of the former above 10,000,000 quarters, costing about £25,000,000, was for grain imported into the United Kingdom. There had been no such importation since 1847; and thence the recurrence of a similar monetary crisis, which all the intermediate supplies of gold, great as they were, had proved insufficient to prevent.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

duce whatever, but is simply a remittance of wealth made in the gold regions, or of commercial fortunes realised there, from the impulse given to every species of industry by the gold discoveries. These are remitted home or brought by the fortunate holders without any corresponding export of British manufactures paid, as money forming part of rents or surplus wealth is remitted from Scotland or Ireland to London to be spent. In the third place, what is most material of all, the import and export of gold, or any other article of import, differs in this vital respect from the export of native produce or manufactures, that a *double* import takes place, but only a *single* export of the produce of *British industry*. If £5,000,000 worth of English manufactures are sent to America or Australia, to buy an equal amount of gold, there is an equal balance of imports and exports. But if the £5,000,000 worth of gold is immediately exported to buy foreign grain, the imports are £10,000,000, while the exports of *British produce* are only £5,000,000. This would be immaterial if the gold was a mere article of commerce, like sugar or molasses; but it becomes very different when, in addition to that, it is the sole foundation of currency and credit, on the abstraction of which both fall to the ground.

148. Danger of gold passing merely through the richer states.

There is another consideration of the very highest importance connected with this matter of a great influx of gold from the gold regions into the British Islands, especially when a great import of foreign goods is at the same time going on. It is this: when gold in great quantities flows into the rich State, either from its own colonies or foreign countries, it necessarily becomes *cheap, because it is plentiful*, and of course all other commodities become comparatively dear. But this state of things cannot long continue; it is speedily corrected by the efflux of gold to, and imports of commodities from, poorer States, in which the former is more valuable, because it is more scarce—the latter cheaper,

because labour is less highly paid. Thus the constant tendency of commerce, in such an old and commercial State, is to run into an *efflux of gold, and influx of commodities.* The country which the gold first reaches becomes a mere siphon, by which it is conducted to foreign States. No state of traffic can be conceived more perilous, especially when currency and credit are rendered dependent on the retention of the precious metals; for the first keeps credit constantly on the verge of paralysis, the last industry, under the weight of irresistible foreign competition. Adam Smith, long ago, stated this low price of gold in Spain, and its constant tendency to leave the country in consequence, arising from the possession of the gold regions, which all the severity of the laws could not prevent, as the main cause of the decline of Old Spain; and whoever studies with attention the history of this country, since the gold discoveries came into operation in 1852, will have too much reason to fear that the same lasting and insurmountable difficulty, as long as the currency is based on gold, is beginning to affect its fortunes.

149. Erroneous argument of the bullionists on this subject.

Sensible of the truth of these facts, but anxious to avoid the inferences deducible from them, the supporters of the bullion system affirm that the scarcity of money and rise of interest which is now periodically, and at short intervals, felt as so severe a scourge by the commercial and industrial interest of Great Britain, is not owing to the want of gold, but the *want of capital;* that the nation is at times engaged in a desperate struggle for money with foreign nations, which require it for undertakings of their own; and that it is this which runs interest up to 7 or 10 per cent. A very little consideration, however, must convince every dispassionate observer, that this view is entirely erroneous, and that it is not capital, but gold currency, which is awanting when interest is thus run up. The panic was stopped in 1825, and interest soon brought down, by the discovery of £2,000,000 of old notes in a chest, and the

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

issue of £8,000,000 additional notes by the Bank of England; in 1848, by a letter from Lord John Russell suspending the Bank Charter Act, which in three months brought it down to 4 per cent; in 1856, by the arrival of the James Baines and the Lightning, with £1,300,000 in specie, about half of which only remained in the vaults of the Bank. In all these cases, *no addition was made to the capital* of the country by the change which stopped the panic and lowered the interest, but an inconsiderable addition was only made to the circulating medium, which at once had that effect. On the contrary, the national capital was in all these cases *seriously diminished* before the rate of interest fell, by the fall of prices which the abstraction of the currency occasioned, but, nevertheless, interest was at once reduced by the addition of a few millions to the circulating medium. Under the present system, capital to the amount of £200,000,000 may be, and often is, waiting in London ready to be advanced at 3 or 3½ per cent, when, nevertheless, it is all locked up like a fertilising stream by frost, solely by the abstraction of two or three millions of gold from the banks, in whose notes the payments to the borrowers are to be made.

150. The monetary crisis of 1847 was owing to Free Trade and the monetary laws.

The Free Trade and monetary systems of Sir R. Peel, therefore, are directly chargeable with the extreme severity of the commercial and monetary crisis of 1847 and 1848, because the first established a state of commerce in which the imports necessarily so largely preponderated over the exports that any considerable addition to the former, in the shape of commodities, required to be paid for in specie, thus occasioning a great drain of the precious metals, while the latter rendered unavoidable the destruction of credit and ruin of industry, *from the effects of that very drain* on the metallic treasures of the nation. Free Trade *alone* would never have produced these calamitous results, if unconnected with a monetary system, resting on the retention of gold; it would merely have produced a growing balance of im-

ports over exports, which in the end might have proved detrimental to native industry, and put a stop to national progress. But when, simultaneously with the removal of all restrictions on the importation of foreign agricultural produce, there was established a system which rendered the currency and credit of the nation entirely dependent on the stock of gold and silver in the Bank of England, which any bad harvest at home, or extraordinary demand for specie abroad, might at any time entirely exhaust, the *united system* rendered certain the frequent and periodical recurrence of the most appalling calamities. Such, accordingly, immediately ensued on the first failure of crop after 1846; and the experience of the last two years has abundantly proved, that not all the gold of Australia and California can prevent it recurring on the first considerable drain of the precious metals.*

Sir R. Peel's monetary measure proceeded on the

* Interest is now (17th Nov. 1856) at 7 per cent; the stock of gold in the Bank of England is only £9,530,000, notwithstanding the immense supplies, not less than £30,000,000, annually received from California and Australia. The entire absorption of this vast importation of the precious metals is in part owing to the steady drain of £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 annually to India and China. But it is, in a great degree, to be ascribed also to the vast export of gold *to pay for grain* imported under the new system, which in the year 1855, though a year of war and a fine harvest, cost the nation £17,500,000, the greater part of which was *paid in specie*, for the nations from whom we imported it would take nothing else.

NOTE.—*November* 12, 1857. The paragraph in the text, and preceding note, were written on 6th November 1856. While this sheet is going through the press, the *Times* of November 12, 1857, contains these announcements:—

1. Bank Charter suspended.
2. Interest in London, 10 per cent.
3. „ in Hamburg, 10 per cent.
4. „ in Paris, 8½ per cent.
5. „ in New York, 25 per cent.
6. Suspension of cash payments general by all banks in the United States.
7. Two banks stopped in Glasgow, and one in Liverpool, and a great bill panic in London.
8. Commercial credit and transactions almost suspended in the country.
9. Bullion in the Bank, £7,170,000.
10. Reserve notes in the Bank, £975,000.
11. Bank liabilities, £40,875,000.

How soon has the prediction in the text been verified!

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

principle that the distress which had so frequently overwhelmed the country in the last twenty years, was mainly owing to the *over-trading* encouraged by excessive issues of paper, and that the only way to check it, and at the same time to maintain the currency of the country upon a proper basis, was to compel the Bank to buy all the gold which might be brought to it, at a fixed price, and at the same time put it under such restrictions as should compel it to contract its issues as soon as the exchange became adverse, and a drain upon its metallic treasures appeared likely to set in. Having done this, he thought both over-speculation at one time, and a serious drain of gold at another, would be effectually prevented. He said to the Bank virtually: "I have laid you in irons; do your worst." The object was praiseworthy, and such as cannot too seriously arrest the attention of every statesman who has the good of his country at heart. Unfortunately, the means he adopted to accomplish this object, so far from effecting it, had the directly opposite consequence, and have contributed more than anything else to the aggravation of the very evils against which they were intended to guard.

151. Sir Robert Peel's object in the Act of 1844.

152. The very opposite effects have followed.

This is now decisively demonstrated by experience. So far from the Act of 1844 having been followed by an equable and self-regulated currency, and speculation leading to disaster checked, neither were ever so frequent as they have been since his Act came into operation. From 1784 to 1844, interest had never varied more than from 4 to 5 per cent, with the exception of a short time in 1838, when it was at 6 per cent. But during the twelve years which have elapsed since 1844, its variations have been so excessive as to defeat all mercantile foresight, and, on repeated occasions, involve whole innocent classes in hopeless ruin. During that short period, there have been no less than *fifty* changes of the rate of discount, which has varied from 1½ to 10 per cent.[1] It is hard to say whether its excessively low rate at one time, or

[1] Tooke and Newmarsh, iv. 406, vi. 167, 563.

its ruinous height at another, have proved most prejudicial. In 1845 and 1846, the rate was 2½ and 3 per cent, and it has frequently been even lower since that time, especially in 1852 and 1853, in the first of which years it was at 1½, and the paper of the Bank of England in circulation rose to £24,000,000—of the whole empire, to £39,000,000. The consequence was, the excessive and inordinate speculation and undertakings of those years. In November 1847, it was at 8 per cent, and at 7 per cent for a month, as it was in April and November 1856. Thence the grievous contraction of credit and ruin of undertakings in those disastrous years, especially the first. The low rate of interest at one time plunged the nation into a host of undertakings, which the sudden raising of it, and contraction of credit at another, wholly disabled it from completing. And all this ensued from no fault on the part of the speculators, but simply from the operation of the monetary laws, which rendered currency and credit dependent on the retention of gold, which, under the Free-trade system, at the same time introduced, by the changes of foreign commerce could not by possibility be retained.

153. Way in which the monetary laws inflamed speculation.

The way in which the Act of 1844 inflamed speculation when times were prosperous, and the precious metals flowed in in abundance, was this: Being obliged by law to take all the gold presented to it at any time, and pay for it in silver, or its own notes, at the rate of £3, 17s. 10½d., *whatever its market value was at the time*, it necessarily followed that the Bank was gorged with gold at one time, when the market price was below that sum, and stripped of it at another, when it was above it. This accordingly ensued in a few years after the passing of the Act. In 1846, the gold in the Bank had reached the then unprecedented sum of £16,500,000; in 1847, it was down at £8,312,000; and in 1852 it was as high as £22,000,000. In the first period, the Bank directors being in advance for gold to the extent of sixteen millions

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

sterling, had no alternative but to *push their business to the uttermost*, in order to indemnify themselves for the interest of the enormous outlay required by the mass of gold forced upon them. Thence the lowering of interest on discounts to 2 and 2½ per cent, the issue of £23,000,000 in notes, and the enormous speculation in railways and other undertakings consequent on such a state of things. Thence also the sudden contraction of credit, rise of interest to 8 per cent, and reducing of the Bank notes in circulation, the capital and wants of the country remaining the same, to £16,500,000 in 1847, and 10 per cent in 1857! The Bank Charter Act should be entitled, "An Act for the *better securing the inflammation of speculation in periods of prosperity, and the entire destruction of credit in periods of adversity.*"*

154. Ultimate effects of Free Trade, irrespective of the Currency.

These evils are so pressing, and so certain of recurrence at stated periods, and after brief intervals, in any considerable mercantile community, that there can be no doubt that they will ere long force on their own cure, in spite of all the efforts of the great capitalists to perpetuate a state of things so favourable to their peculiar interests. This can only be done by having an adequate portion of the currency properly regulated to prevent undue extension, and secured on the credit of Government, ready for issue when the gold is withdrawn, and not liable to payment on demand in specie. But supposing this done, there are other effects, consequent on Free Trade, not so palpable

* In August 1844, the circulation of bank notes for England was—

The Bank of England, . . .	£21,448,000	
Private banks, ...	4,624,179	
Joint-stock banks, . . .	3,340,326	
		£29,412,505
On November 22, 1856, it was—		
The Bank of England, . . .	£20,062,041	
Private banks, ...	3,855,971	
Joint-stock banks, ...	3,113,886	
		27,031,898
Being a diminution of . . .		£2,380,607

since the Act of 1844 was passed, and this to accommodate a rapidly increasing commerce, our foreign trade alone having nearly trebled since that time.

in the outset, but still more powerful, because irremediable in the end, which deserve the most serious attention, both with reference to national independence, progress, and prosperity. These consequences are quite independent of anything erroneous in the currency, and arise from certain fixed laws of nature, over which, like the recurrence of winter and summer, man has no control, but which are not less irresistible in their operation upon the life of nations than the mutations of the seasons are upon the growth or decay of vegetable life.

155. Capital facilitates manufactures far more than agriculture.

The first of these is the law that the advantages of capital, machinery, and the division of labour, though not unknown in the cultivation of the earth, are far less considerable than those in the production of manufactures. It is not by any means meant to be asserted, in laying down this proposition, that capital and skill are of no value in the cultivation of the earth. Unquestionably they are of great service, as any one may see by comparing the agriculture of Ireland or France with that of the best parts of Flanders, England, and Scotland. But giving full effect to the greatest improvements in the cultivation of the soil—conceding as much as the most sanguine high farmer would contend for, to tile-draining, improved manuring, large farms, reaping and thrashing machines, and skilled labour—still it is evident that all they can effect in increasing the amount, or lessening the cost of agricultural produce, is very little in comparison of what may be effected by the application of capital, science, and the division of labour to the production of manufactures. The average produce of an imperial acre in cereal crops, in Great Britain, may be now taken at 3 quarters, or 24 bushels an acre. Let it be conceded that, by the application of science and skill, it can be raised to 9 quarters, or 72 bushels. Probably the most sanguine high farmer will not allege that more is possible. That change supposes the produce of a given space to be tripled; but though such an increase is considerable, it is as nothing compared

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

to the increase of productive power by the application of capital and skill to the production of manufactures, which can with ease be made *not three but an hundredfold.* Two men can there be made, by the aid of machinery, to do the work of two hundred. There is an obvious limit, therefore, to the power of capital and science in increasing the return of agricultural labour, but none can be assigned to their influence in increasing the amount of manufacturing production. The famous arithmetical and geometrical progression, erroneously applied by Malthus to the relative powers of population and labour in the raising of subsistence, is truly applicable to labour applied to agriculture and manufactures. Hence the rich and old State must always undersell the young and poor State in manufactures, and be always undersold by it in agricultural produce.

156. Everything that is plentiful becomes cheap.

The second law is, that everything that is plentiful, and money among the rest, becomes cheap. This may seem so obvious that it does not require to be stated, but nevertheless its effects, as of all laws in universal operation, are in the highest degree important. It often determines the life of nations as certainly as the law which makes a stone fall to the ground retains the planets in their orbits. As money, from being plentiful, becomes cheap, the result of course is, that everything, as measured in money, becomes dear. Hence the wages of labour in the rich State become high in comparison of those in the poor one—the latter, as Dr Johnson said of eggs in the Highlands being cheap, "not because eggs are many, but because pence are few." In manufacturing industry, the application of capital, machinery, and the division of labour, much more than compensates the height in the money wages of labour; but in agriculture no such compensation is possible. The poor State always undersells the rich one in the produce of the fields. England can undersell India in cotton manufactures made of an article which grows on the banks of the Ganges; but it is undersold by the fellahs of Egypt, the serfs of Russia, and the peasants of Poland, in the produc-

tion of wheat or barley, though grown at the gates of London. Hence there is a constant pressure in the rich State on *rural labour*, arising from foreign competition; and where it is excluded by prohibitory duties, an incessant clamour for their removal. When this clamour becomes irresistible, and Free Trade is introduced, domestic agriculture must of necessity decline, unless supported for a time by accidental causes, and the growth of the *rural* inhabitants be checked; but no similar check is to be looked for in manufacturing industry, unless impeded by hostile foreign tariffs; and therefore, for a very long period at least, no retarding of *urban* population is to be apprehended.

157. Greater mortality of cities than rural districts.

The third law is, that great cities are the grave of the human race, while the country fields are its cradle. This truth, long and stoutly denied by the commercial and Free-trade parties, is now completely set at rest by the Registrar-General's returns in Great Britain, and similar statistics in other countries. It is now ascertained by this unexceptionable evidence, that no great towns can maintain their own numbers unless fed by immigration from the country. In Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Glasgow, 49 per cent of deaths are children under five years of age; and even in London, probably the most healthy metropolis in the world, three-fifths of the persons above twenty years of age were born in the country. Where the annual mortality in rural districts in England is 18 in 1000 of the whole population, in manufacturing districts it is 1 in 24. In Scotland, in 138 town districts, the annual deaths were 1 in 37; in 14 agricultural, only 1 in 68.[1] * Sanitary improvements,

[1] Registrar-General's Report, Jan. 1856, 4.

* "In Scotland, 41,925 deaths were registered during the fourth quarter, being an increase to the extent of 744 above those of the corresponding quarter of the previous year, and an increase of 2076 above those of the previous quarter of 1856. Allowing for increase of population, this would give the annual proportion of 196 deaths in every 10,000, or nearly 1 death in every 50 persons. The proportion of deaths was lowest in the north-western and northern counties, and highest in the south-western and south-eastern counties. Of the individual counties, the proportion of deaths was lowest in Orkney and Peebles, where it was at the rate of 101 and 107 deaths respec-

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

improved medical treatment, and an elevation of general comfort, may do much to check this frightful mortality, but it can never remove it entirely, or stamp any other character on great cities but that of being the great charnel-houses of mortality. But the effect of the law upon the strength and lifetime of empires is obvious, especially when taken in conjunction with the tendency, in rich and old societies of industry, to flock to the towns and shun the country. This state of things may for a time exhibit a great increase in urban, and proportional decline in rural population; but it must in the end seriously affect the growth of the entire body, and augment the preponderance of towns over the country, which is the invariable precursor of national decline.

158. Manner in which these circumstances arrest population.

This universal law of nature has taken effect with such severity in France, since the vast migration of its rural inhabitants into the great towns which has taken place during the last five years, that while the increase of its inhabitants from 1845 to 1850 was 1,240;000 persons, from 1850 to 1855 it was only 250,000; a decline which has justly struck the philosophers of that country with astonishment. The census of 1856 shows that the metropolis, and all the manufacturing districts during this period, have largely increased in numbers, while most of the rural have decreased.[1] It is easily explained by the fact, that agriculture has so much declined, that from being an exporting country, France had come, in 1856, a year of scarcity, to import 4,000,000 quarters of wheat, while Paris had increased, in the same five years, by 350,000 souls. The change here so strikingly evinced is one which takes place in every old country at a certain stage of its progress in regard to population, and arises from two causes. In the first place, the loud and menacing cry for cheap bread in the towns, by forcing on foreign

[1] Courrier, 1856; Moniteur, Dec. 31, 1856.

tively in every 10,000 persons, and the highest in Lanark, where, allowing for increase of population, it was at the rate of 268 deaths in every 10,000 persons."—*Quarterly Return*, 1856.

importation, drives numbers into the cities as the only place where they can find the means of earning a livelihood; that is, it drives them from the cradles into the graves of the human race. In the next place, the cultivation of the country is mainly turned to pasturage, as experience now shows that no foreign State can compete with the domestic growers in the production of sheep and cattle. But sheep or cattle farms do not employ a tenth part of the labourers which those devoted to the raising of grain crops do, and thus the prolific power of the country is arrested at once by the migration of a large part of its inhabitants into cities, and the turning the industry of those who remain into pastoral instead of agricultural pursuits, and at the same time the emigration of vast multitudes in quest of that employment in the colonies or distant lands which they can no longer hope to find in their own.

159. Effect of these laws combined.

Whoever considers these laws of nature with attention cannot fail to see that they render certain and unavoidable, in a certain stage of society, the commencement of decline, and that the loud and increasing cry for Free Trade is the *first symptom of the arresting cause having come into operation.* As the concession of this policy is equivalent to a direct exposure of domestic industry to the competition of foreigners, which, in cereal productions at least, it is unable to withstand, so it never can become successful till the interest of the commercial classes and the consumers has become more powerful than that of the agricultural and producing. But when the victory is gained, and foreign competition fully admitted, national decline ere long is inevitable. It is so because foreign industry, generally speaking, has the advantage in the fields over domestic in such circumstances; because population is driven into unhealthy towns, where it can find branches of industry that can compete with foreigners, instead of healthy fields, where it cannot; because emigration, from the discouragement of rural industry, becomes

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

so great as first to check the growth, and then cause the decline of inhabitants; and because the preservation of national independence in the long run becomes impossible when a considerable portion of the national subsistence is derived from foreign States. Great Britain, before Free Trade had been established ten years, had come to import from 7,000,000 to 10,000,000 quarters annually, being nearly a half of the national consumption, by human beings, of cereal products; while above two millions of its labourers, chiefly agricultural, had emigrated to foreign lands.* More than half of this immense supply comes from America and Russia, and by their uniting together, and passing a non-intercourse Act, which was an event imminent in 1856, before the Treaty of Paris, subsistence might any day be run up to famine prices in the British Islands. The consciousness of this is what renders the Government timid, and has so often led to the acquiescence in insults which would have been mortally resented in former days.

160. Free Trade induces at first cheap prices of food, and then often famine prices.

Although it is by superior cheapness of production in poor States that the decline of agriculture is produced in rich ones, under the Free-trade system, it is not to be supposed that this advantage is to be *permanently* enjoyed by the nation which has adopted this policy. On the contrary, famine prices never are so frequent or disastrous as in the country which has most implicitly embraced that policy. *At first*, indeed, the free introduction of foreign grain occasions a prodigious fall of prices, and con-

* "According," say the Commissioners, "to the very interesting returns received from the Emigration Commissioners, it would appear that from the 30th of June 1841 to the 31st of March 1851, 1,240,375 persons, and from the 1st April 1851 to the 31st December 1855, 847,119 persons, amounting in all to 2,087,856, *who were born in Ireland*, are estimated to have emigrated from the ports of the United Kingdom in the time specified, or 14¼ years. Of these emigrants 76.7 per cent were bound for the United States, 19.7 for British North America, and 3.6 for the Australian colonies. Between the 1st of April 1851 and the 31st of December 1855, the emigration of the Irish to the Australian colonies was 6.5 per cent of the total number of emigrants, the emigration to the United States was 81.4 per cent, and that to British North America had fallen to 12 per cent." Emigration from Irish ports is still gradually diminishing. From 190,322 in 1852, it has dwindled to 91,914 in 1855, and will probably become less.—*Emigration Commissioners' Report*, 1856.

sequently great ease and prosperity to the consuming classes. But this auspicious state of things cannot be of long duration. Low prices must ere long discourage production; corn-lands come to be thrown into pasture, or abandoned to nature; and in time the home supply is so much reduced that the whole import from abroad makes no material addition to the stock of annual subsistence.* This, accordingly, is what took place during the first years after Free Trade was introduced into England; prices of wheat fell to 30s. and 41s.; and the supply of wheat raised in the British Islands declined about 4,000,000 quarters, being the whole amount, in average years, of the foreign importation of that article.† But as a foreign supply of food

* In Ireland the decrease in the production of wheaten crops since 1846 has been ascertained by authentic evidence. From the Government surveys, it appears, that since that time, while the potato and turnip crops have increased, the wheaten crops have declined thus :—

Years.	Wheat.	Potatoes.	Turnips.	Mangold Wurzel.
	Barrels, 20 st.	Barrels, 20 st.	Tons.	Tons.
1849	3,641,198	32,112,679	5,805,848	346,595
1850	2,604,164	31,567,917	5,439,005	364,036
1851	2,508,963	35,528,175	6,081,326	466,235
1852	1,938,941	34,044,831	5,675,847	557,139
1853	1,904,302	45,932,301	6,562,471	588,988

Proving clearly that the fall in the production of wheat was owing to its low price; for there was a *simultaneous rise* in the production of potatoes for human subsistence, and green crops for cattle. In 1848, the decrease of cereal crops, as compared with 1847, was 673,488 tons. Increase of potatoes, as compared with 1847, 725,521 tons.—*Agricultural Returns, Ireland*, 1848, p. v., Introduction; Ibid., 1855, p. xv.

† Wheat sold in 169 Inspected Markets in England.

Years.	Quarters.	Price.	Years.	Quarters.	Price.
1845	6,666,246	50s. 10d.	1850	4,688,246	40s. 3d.
1846	5,958,962	54s. 8d.	1851	4,487,041	38s. 6d.
1847	4,637,616	69s. 9d.	1852	4,854,513	40s. 9d.
1848	5,399,833	50s. 6d.	1853	4,560,912	53s. 3d.
1849	4,453,982	44s. 3d.	1854	3,913,257	74s. 8d.

—*Stat. Abst.*, 1842-56, pp. 30, 31.

It appears, from Captain Larcom's reports, that between 1846 and 1852, the production of wheat in Ireland had fallen off 1,500,000 quarters, and the export

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

is much more precarious than that derived from home agriculture, it is to be expected that when a nation comes to depend for a considerable part of its food upon the former source, the variations of price will proportionally become excessive, and the alternation of ruinously low and famine prices most severely distress the whole community. It was not in the days of the Republic, when "every rood had its man," and Italy was an exporting country, that the Roman poet deplored the famine which brought the State to the verge of ruin, but in the days of the Empire, when free trade in grain had been established for two centuries—when Italy was a sheep-walk, and the imperial people were fed by the harvests of Egypt and Libya.*

Although, however, it may be evident that Free Trade

of that grain to England had declined in a similar proportion. Supposing the decrease in Scotland to have been 500,000 quarters, which is probable, as it increased by 700,000 quarters with the rise of prices between 1852 and 1856, we have the production of wheat in the United Kingdom lessened by 4,000,000 quarters in eight years, being very nearly the amount of the annual importation. See *Edinburgh Review*, April 1853, p. 293, and HALL MAXWELL'S *Report of Scotland*, 1854. The acres under wheat in Scotland in 1855 were 191,000, and in 1856, 261,000, showing an increase of 70,000 acres, on which probably 280,000 quarters were raised in a single year under high prices. Beyond all doubt, the decline under the previous low prices was at least as great. In 1849, Mr M'Culloch estimated the production of wheat in Scotland at 1,225,000 quarters; in 1855 it was found by the returns to be only 650,000, showing a falling off of 675,000 quarters.—TOOKE and NEWMARSH, v. 107.—

* The classical scholar will recollect the noble lines of Claudian:—

"Advenio supplex, non ut proculcet Araxem
Consul ovans, nostræve premant pharetrata secures
Susa, nec ut rubris aquilas figamus arenis.
Hæc nobis, hæc ante dabas: *nunc pabula tantum*
Româ precor: miserere tuæ, pater optime, gentis.
Extremam defende famem. Satiavimus iram,
Si qua fuit: lugenda Getis, et flenda Suevis
Hausimus: ipsa meos exhorret Parthia casus.
Quid referam morbive luem, cumulosve repletos
Stragibus, et crebrus corrupto sidere mortes?
. . . . . .
Ille diu miles populus, qui præfuit orbi,
Qui trabeas et sceptra dabat, quem semper in armis
Horribilem gentes, placidum sensere subactæ.
Nunc inhonorus, egens, perfert miserabile pacis
Supplicium, nulloque palam circumdatus hoste
Obsessi discrimen habet."

CLAUDIAN, *De Bello Gildonico.*

Free Trade was forced upon Sir R. Peel.

must be attended with those weakening, and, in the end, fatal results, yet it is not to be supposed that they are all to be ascribed as a reproach to Sir R. Peel, or that he is to be charged with having occasioned the ruin of his country, because he was the ostensible author of a system to which future times will perhaps impute it. The truth rather is, that he was the creature of circumstances throughout, and compelled by the loud national voice to adopt the policy, and that his sagacity led him to perceive that power, however acquired, was to be retained on no other terms. The nation had reached that point which always arrives with a rich State in a certain stage of its progress, when the influence and power of realised wealth and consumption have become superior to those of industry and production, and when, consequently, the desire to aid both by cheapening everything, becomes the ruling principle in the State. As the adoption of this principle is the indication of the penult state of national progress—and it can only be desired in the last stage of national wealth—so it is unquestionably the first step in national decline. This will appear first in the agricultural districts and the rural population, who, deprived of the chief market for their produce by foreign importation from cheaper States, will flock to cities in quest of subsistence, or emigrate to foreign lands, leaving their own in great part to be traversed by flocks of sheep or herds of cattle, or to return to the domain of the heath-fowl and the plover. To the very last hour of national existence, the great cities will continue to prosper, and commerce will exhibit a flattering aspect, but it will be carried on between the manufacturer of the old and rich and the grain-grower of the new and foreign State; the rural inhabitants of the former will experience little or no benefit from it.

Thus population, impelled from the cradles to the graves of mortality, is first retarded, and then arrested, in its progress; the military strength of the nation is lessened by the failure of recruits from the rural districts,

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

162. Effects of this system on national progress and independence.

from which they must always be principally derived; timidity is impressed upon its rulers from the dread of impending danger; and the *foreign-fed* nation, trembling for its subsistence, comes at last to submit to any insult rather than face hostilities with its distant bread-maker, or the producer of the chief part of the raw material required for its manufactures. How exactly this state of things was exemplified in the last ages of the Roman empire need be told to no scholar; how early it has commenced with the introduction of the Free-trade system into Great Britain, may be judged of from the facts, that before it had been ten years in operation, the imports of foreign grain had come from almost nothing in ordinary seasons, to be from 7,000,000 to 10,000,000 quarters annually, being from a third to a half of the national subsistence; that the production of cereal crops to nearly the same amount had declined in the British Islands; and that while the imports and exports of the produce of towns had signally increased, emigration* had become permanent at the

* Annual Emigration, and Paupers, excluding Vagrants, relieved in Great Britain and Ireland from 1846 to 1856.

Years.	Emigrants.	Paupers relieved.		
		England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1846	129,851	—	—	—
1847	258,270	—	—	—
1848	248,089	934,489	82,357	620,747
1849	299,498	920,543	79,031	307,970
1850	280,849	860,893	76,906	209,187
1851	335,966	834,424	75,111	171,418
1852	368,764	798,822	75,437	141,822
1853	329,937	818,337	78,929	106,802
1854	323,429	851,369	79,887	86,819
1855	176,807	877,767	79,973	73,083
1856	176,554	843,806	81,542	56,094
Totals,	2,928,014	7,740,380	709,183	1,773,942
Average,	266,183¼	860,042⅔	78,798⅓	197,104⅔

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1842, 1856, p. 35.

rate of above 260,000 souls a-year: nearly 3,000,000 persons, chiefly in the prime of life, had left our shores in the last ten years, being more than triple those who had emigrated in the preceding ten;* and the persons in receipt of parochial relief in the two islands had never been less than 1,000,000 annually, sometimes above 1,500,000.

163. Protection must continue to be the policy of young and growing States.

It is generally expected by the Free-trade party that these distressing consequences will be temporary only; and that they will cease with the adoption of a similar liberal commercial policy by other nations. A little consideration, however, must show that these expectations are not, for a very long period at least, likely to be realised. As Free Trade is the cry of old and wealthy States, so, and for a similar reason, Protection is the cry of young and poor ones. Both are actuated by the interests of the dominant classes in these respective and opposite states of society. The consumers being the ruling class in the old State, Free Trade is inscribed on its banners; the producers being the dominant one in the rising one, Protection is its war-cry. To expect that they will adopt our policy is as hopeless as for them to expect that we will adopt theirs. Accordingly, while old and wealthy Britain has permanently embraced the Free-trade policy, Russia has met it by duties amounting almost to prohibition;† America with a fixed import-duty on every

* Emigration in the ten preceding Years—(1836-1845).

Years.	Emigrants.	Years.	Emigrants.
1836,	75,417	Brought forward,	451,977
1837,	72,034	1842,	128,344
1838,	33,222	1843,	57,212
1839,	62,217	1844,	70,686
1840,	90,743	1845,	93,501
1841,	118,344		801,780
Carry forward,	451,977	Average,	80,178

—Porter, 128.

† See *Customs Tariffs of all Nations*, by C. N. Newdegate, Esq., M.P., London, 1855; a work of vast labour, research, and accuracy, of the highest political and social importance, and every way worthy of its able and accomplished author.

CHAP. XLIII.

1848.

article of 30 per cent; France with duties also amounting to prohibition; and Prussia with duties varying practically from 30 to 50 per cent.

164. Which is the result, on their part, of necessity.

It is no wonder they do so; if they acted otherwise, their rising manufactures would at once be extinguished by the British steam-engine. They will take our gold to any amount, but little else. Accordingly, our exports to the countries from which we most largely import grain are surprisingly small; a clear proof that Free Trade has had nothing to do with the increase of our exports, which has undoubtedly taken place since its adoption.* They say to us in substance, "It is all very well for you who have climbed up to the summit of manufacturing greatness, by means of your coal and protection, to give it up when you are too high to have any reason, in manufactures, to dread foreign competition; and you have need of foreign grain to keep down the price of your own. When we enjoy similar advantages, or have attained as great eminence, we shall do the same. In the mean time you must allow us to adopt the policy by which your industry was sheltered for two centuries; and when it has produced similar results to us, we may make a similar change."

If we would correctly estimate the effect of Sir R. Peel's commercial policy upon our foreign trade, we must examine its effects from its introduction in 1846 to 1852, because then it was the *sole* change in operation. In the latter

* Exports to, and Imports from, the undermentioned States from 1851 to 1854.

Years.	Exports to United States.	Imports from United States.	Exports to Russia.	Imports from Russia.	Exports to France.	Imports from France	Exports to Prussia.	Imports from Prussia.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1851	14,362,976	23,616,435	1,287,704	5,199,486	2,028,463	8,083,112	503,531	2,817,855
1852	16,567,737	29,183,079	1,099,917	6,403,068	2,731,286	6,590,844	581,884	1,972,332
1853	23,257,487	27,458,722	1,228,404	9,020,841	1,371,817	8,615,799	579,588	3,663,561
1854	21,127,631	30,060,613	† 54,291	2,134,028†	1,406,932	7,411,358	798,434	4,274,173

† War.

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1842-1856; and *Trade and Navigation Reports*, 1855, pp. 7, 9.

1848. 165.

The effects of Free Trade must be judged of before 1852.

year the gold fields of California and Australia came into operation, which have in the next four years thrown £100,000,000 of additional gold into the circulation of the world, the greater part of which has either directly or indirectly found its way to this country. The effect of this immense addition to the currency of the world, to the industry of all nations, and in an especial manner of the British Islands, has been prodigious. It has raised our exports from £58,000,000 in 1851 to £97,000,000 in 1854, £95,000,000 in 1855, and £115,000,000 in 1856;* and augmented our imports from £157,000,000 in the former year to £172,000,000 in the latter. Between 1846 and 1852 the increase of exports, when Free Trade alone was operating, was very small, although the imports chiefly in grain had greatly increased. That the great increase which has since taken place is the result of the general impulse given to industry by the rise of prices consequent on the gold discoveries, and is scarcely at all to be ascribed to British free-trade, is decisively proved by the facts that it *did not take place to any great extent till the gold discoveries came into operation*, and that since that time it has been universal over the world, and not peculiar to the British Islands. And in truth the increase since the change in the value of money, which has been to the extent of nearly 30 per cent, has rendered this increase in the declared value of commodities rather apparent than real; for the price put

* Exports to, and Imports from, the British Islands from 1853 to 1856.

Years.	Imports—Computed Value.	Exports—Declared Value.	Balance, without Colonial Exports.
1853	£124,338,478	£98,933,781	—
1854	152,591,513	97,184,725	£55,406,788
1855	143,542,851	95,688,085	47,972,250
1856	172,654,823	115,890,857	56,764,966

—*Parliamentary Returns*, 1856; and *Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1852-1856, p. 12.

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

upon exported articles has increased also, if not in a similar, at least in a very great proportion.*

However much opinions may vary on many of the conclusions now deduced from the facts of contemporary history, there is one point upon which all must be agreed, and which is of vital importance to the future indepen-

* Comparative Increase of French and British Exports.

Years.	Exports from France. Francs.	Exports from Great Britain.
1855, . . .	1,660,000,000	£95,669,000
1845, . . .	848,000,000	60,111,000
Increase, . .	812,000,000	35,558,000

Here France has increased her exports under Protection upwards of 95 per cent, while Great Britain has only increased hers by 58 per cent under Free Trade.

Comparative Progress of France, America, and Great Britain.

Years.	France.		United States.		Great Britain.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1846	36,800,000	34,100,000	25,352,458	23,643,316	132,288,345	57,786,875
1847	39,000,000	35,600,000	30,530,341	33,051,746	126,130,986	58,842,377
1848	22,300,000	33,200,000	32,291,443	32,090,923	132,617,681	52,849,415
1849	31,200,000	41,300,000	28,200,000	28,100,000	164,539,504	63,596,025
1850	31,200,000	44,900,000	34,700,000	28,400,000	100,460,433	71,367,885
1851	29,400,000	50,600,000	42,100,000	34,900,000	110,484,997	74,448,722
1852†	39,400,000	49,300,000	41,500,000	36,900,000	109,331,158	78,076,854
1853	44,100,000	54,500,000	52,500,000	40,700,000	123,099,313	98,933,781
1854	46,300,000	50,400,000	59,600,000	46,600,000	124,338,478	97,184,726
1855	45,957,000	62,080,000	51,600,000	38,500,000	117,402,366‡	95,688,085

—Porter, 357, 400, 405; Newmarsh, v. 653; *Parl. Stat., Trade and Navigation*, 1855.

Quarters of Wheat imported to Michaelmas of each Year from 1851 to 1856.

Years.	Quarters.	Value.	Price per Quar.
1851	6,073,555	£11,969,964	38s. 6d.
1852	3,600,521	7,171,037	40s. 9d.
1853	6,097,607	13,847,667	53s. 3d.
1854	5,586,213	20,133,660	72s. 5d.
1855	2,898,871	10,411,762	74s. 8d.
1856	4,337,616	15,868,445	69s. 2d.

—*Statistical Abstract*, No. IV., 1842-56, p. 30.

† Gold discoveries.

‡ Official value for comparison sake. The real value of imports in those two years was £152,519,000 and £143,545,000 respectively.

Necessity of maritime superiority to the present existence of Britain.

dence, it may be even existence, of the British Empire. This is the *absolute necessity* under which we are now laid of *maintaining, at all hazards, our superiority at sea,* if we would avoid blockades of our harbours, and total ruin the moment hostilities of a serious kind break out with *any two* great naval powers. Having brought matters to this point, that though 260,000 emigrants annually leave our shores, still one-third of the food of our people is derived from foreign States, and more than a third of our inhabitants are, directly or indirectly, dependent on the sale of their manufactures in foreign markets for their daily wages, it is evident that, the moment our harbours are blockaded, we must surrender at discretion—just as a fortress must when its supply of provisions is exhausted. In vain shall we rest on the magnitude of our commercial navy, and the resources which, in a protracted war, we would thence derive for maritime conquest. Unless a powerful *war*-navy is kept up, and we are able to maintain the undisputed command of the sea from the outset, we might be starved out in three months.* If Russia and France, or France and America, had gone to war with us in 1854, how long could we have carried on the contest,

* British and Foreign Tonnage with Cargoes, and in Ballast, cleared at Ports in the United Kingdom, out and in.

Years.	British. Tons.	Foreign. Tons.	Total. Tons.
1842,	6,669,995	2,457,479	9,127,474
1843,	7,181,179	2,648,383	9,824,562
1844,	7,500,285	2,846,484	10,346,769
Navigation Laws repealed, July 1849.			
1849,	9,669,638	4,334,750	14,004,388
1850,	9,442,544	5,602,520	14,505,064
1851,	9,820,876	6,159,322	15,980,195
War declared, April 1854.			
1854,	10,744,849	7,924,238	18,669,087
1855,	10,919,732	7,569,738	18,489,470
1856,	12,945,771	8,643,278	21,589,049

—*Stat. Abstract*, No. IV., 1842-1856, p. 27.

Increase in Fifteen Years.

British Tonnage,	200 per cent.
Foreign Tonnage,	350 „

CHAP. XLIII. 1848.

when the grain imported in 1856 alone was 10,000,000 quarters? Nor let us trust too securely to our commercial navy; for, under the action of free trade in shipping, partially introduced in 1823, and fully in 1849, while the British tonnage employed in carrying on our trade has doubled in the last fifteen years, the foreign has considerably more than tripled; and for the first time in British annals, the alarming announcement has appeared in our prints, that the tonnage of the shipping built in the harbours of one only of our commercial rivals considerably exceeds our own.*

* Already the tonnage owned by the United States exceeds three millions, and so actively is ship-building carried on there, that in the year ending 30th June 1856 there were launched 1703 ships, measuring 469,393 tons; whilst in 1855 there were built in the United Kingdom 1098 vessels, of the burden of 320,293 tons. The relative position of the two countries in the competition for the trade of the world, which is now going on, is of a nature to excite grave reflections, though our existing tonnage still slightly exceeds that of the United States.—*Morning Post*, May 27, 1857.

CHAPTER XLIV.

FRANCE FROM THE TREATY OF FEBRUARY 13, 1841, TO THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF ORLEANS IN JULY 1843.

1. Prosperous condition of France in 1841.

VICTORIOUS over all his internal enemies by the suppression of every insurrection which had been attempted to overturn his government, and extricated by the wisdom of M. Guizot, and the recent pacification of the East, from the external dangers which had latterly been so threatening, Louis Philippe seemed in the beginning of 1841 to have overcome all his difficulties, and to be firmly seated on the throne. The bourgeoisie which had placed him on it, had maintained him there through every peril, with a perseverance which nothing had been able to overcome. The populace and *prolétaires,* by whose physical aid the victory had been originally gained, had seen, indeed, with indignation, its fruits snatched from their grasp, and the advantages and honours of office engrossed by a limited class who had contrived to concentrate in themselves the whole gains and powers of government. Unbounded had been the wrath and jealousy which this disappointment had occasioned, and it had exhaled in repeated insurrections, each more formidable than that which had overturned Charles X., accompanied by extreme temporary suffering, and violent effusion of blood. But all these efforts had been defeated : the cloister of St Méri, the Rue Transnonain, the streets of Lyons, had successively witnessed their overthrow ; and

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

the successful termination of the recent *procès monstre* had extinguished at one blow many of the most determined and formidable of his enemies; the troops of the line had on every occasion stood firm, and seemed desirous of expiating their treachery to one government by their fidelity to another; the national guards, generally speaking, if not active supporters, were at least passive adherents to the cause of order; the press, how hostile soever, was for the time well-nigh worn out by repeated prosecutions; and a bourgeois Chamber of Deputies, elected by a limited class of society, by large majorities supported a Government which showered down all its benefits upon themselves. Finally, the King, blessed with a numerous family, saw his throne surrounded by some who might be expected to prove its firmest support in the hour of trial, and had already signalised themselves by sea and land on many occasions; the heir to the throne, himself in the highest degree popular, had been recently married, and the Duchess of Orleans gave hopes of perpetuating, in a direct line, the descendants of Henry IV. and Louis XIV. Without and within, everything seemed to smile on the Throne of the Barricades; and not only had it acquired consideration in Europe, from the success with which it had repelled so many assaults, but by the mere lapse of time the revolutionary character of its origin was coming to be forgotten, and it was beginning to acquire the firmness and respect which always attends power long established and successfully asserted in the hour of danger.

2. Great material prosperity of the period.

The material prosperity of this period, and of the years which succeeded it, down to nearly the hour of the Revolution of 1848, fully corresponded to these favourable appearances; and if the title of a Government to loyal obedience is to be measured by the amount of physical well-being which it diffuses among its subjects, there never was one in French history more deserving of support. The pacific policy of the Sovereign, cordially

supported by the Chamber, whose interest was identified with it, was the main cause of this auspicious state of things. Assured of peace without, and triumphant over insurrection within, the Government was able to turn its attention mainly to objects of internal improvement, and the enterprise and industry of individuals was presented with a favourable field for exertion, during the whole remainder of his reign. Immense was the effect of this fortunate combination upon the population, wealth, and prosperity of the country. France shared to the very full in the flood of prosperity which, during the years from 1843 to 1847, invigorated England, and which realised itself in the immense network of railways which now overspreads the British Islands. The Government took the lead, as will immediately appear, in these beneficent enterprises on the other side of the Channel, and either was the sole promoter of many of the railways, or the chief shareholder in the lateral lines which were to support the main trunks. The sum expended on railways, either by the Government or private companies, between 1841 and 1847, amounted to no less than £86,000,000, a sum equivalent to at least a third more in Great Britain. The effect of this great expenditure, and of the general confidence in the stability of government which was diffused, was immense. The population of the empire, during the five years from 1841 to 1846, was found, by the census taken at the close of the latter year, to have increased 1,200,000; it had advanced from 32,994,000 to 34,194,000. The produce of the national industry and means of enjoyment, as measured by the amount of exports and imports, was swelled during the same period in a still greater proportion; the former, between 1841 and 1847, increased from £40,000,000 to £47,000,000, the latter from £42,000,000 to £51,000,000. The cities all exhibited unequivocal marks of growing prosperity; the capital, teemed with luxury and magnificence, and the general well-being reacted upon the

CHAP. XLIV. 1841.

Government in the most agreeable way, in the shape of a considerable increase of revenue, without any addition to the public burdens. In a word, judging from external appearances, the Throne of the Barricades was firmly established, not only in the general consent of the most influential classes of the community, but from the substantial benefits it had conferred upon those on whose industry and exertions it was mainly dependent.*

3. Universal thirst for gain.

This fortunate state of things not only diffused general ease and well-being through a large portion of the community, but it rendered government incomparably easier by giving a tried and less dangerous direction to the general objects of desire in all the more affluent classes of the community. Dazzled by the general appearances of prosperity with which they were surrounded, and by the rapid rise in the value of stock of nearly every description which resulted from it, nearly all those who were possessed of any capital, and not a few who were without it, adventured upon the tempting lottery of shares. Such was the success with which these speculations were at first attended, that great fortunes were in several instances realised in a few days; and numbers, without trouble or apparent risk, acquired an independence for life in a few months. As in the days of Law and the Mississippi Scheme, and more recently in the mania of 1835 and 1836, an insatiable passion for speculation seized upon the nation.

* POPULATION, EXPORTS, IMPORTS, REVENUE, AND SHIPPING OF FRANCE, FROM 1841 to 1847—CONVERTED AT 25 FRANCS TO £1.

Years.	Population.	Exports.	Imports.	Revenue.	Shipping—French Tons.	Total Shipping—French and Foreign Tons.
1840	—	£40,436,001	£42,091,440	£49,164,281	658,378	2,481,262
1841	32,994,800	42,614,304	44,856,969	48,487,000	693,449	1,980,837
1842	—	37,610,036	45,681,328	48,467,821	669,604	2,096,131
1843	—	39,678,488	47,476,366	51,142,381	690,416	2,120,965
1844	—	45,871,526	47,717,635	52,827,923	751,702	2,173,147
1845	—	47,497,548	49,695,649	54,463,821	828,753	2,329,231
1846	34,194,000	47,213,276	50,250,680	48,794,821	952,423	2,696,021
1847	—	41,972,000	51,612,000	54,293,733	968,596	2,923,987

—PORTER, pp. 400, 401.

Cabinet ministers, and ladies of fashion, aged generals, and youthful aspirants, shopkeepers and soldiers, merchants and manufacturers—the high and the low, the rich and the poor—all rushed forward to the course, and forgot all their former objects of ambition in the intense thirst for present gratification, or the belief of an immediate acquisition of fortune. That a whole nation could not in this manner rush headlong, and almost blindfolded, into one exciting chase, without the most imminent hazard, was indeed certain; but these risks were entirely overlooked in the intensity of the passions awakened by it; and every one, regardless of the future, sought only to convert the present into a source of pleasure or profit to himself.[1]

[1] Carné, Hist. des Inst. Rep. en France, ii. 228; Regnault, Huit Ans de Louis Philippe, i. 123, 127.

4. Accumulating feelings of discontent in the working classes.

But there are two ways of viewing every question, and different classes of the State to be affected by every change, whether for the better or worse, in the condition of society. As much as the rise in railway shares, and the general prosperity of trade and manufactures, spread wealth and contentment through a large portion of the bourgeois section of the people, did they excite feelings of discontent and envy among a still more numerous class to whom these advantages were unknown. The immense mass of the working classes in the great towns were unable to do more than maintain themselves and their families, legitimate or illegitimate, by the produce of their labour. The peasants in the country, still more numerous, were possessed of such small properties, and these for the most part so heavily burdened with debt, that so far from having anything to spare for speculation, they had the utmost difficulty in providing subsistence in the humblest way for themselves. Such was the weight of the interest of mortgages and public taxes in France, that out of £63,000,000, the annual free produce of the soil, no less than £45,000,000 was absorbed by them, leaving only £18,000,000 to be divided among all the owners. In such a state of society the affluence and growing riches of the bourgeois class, derived chiefly from the expenditure of foreigners

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

or speculations in railway shares, were a grievance the more, and tended to widen the breach which separated the different classes from each other; for, in their much-envied rulers—the shopkeepers and richer proprietors—they beheld the class which had reft from them the spoils of a revolution, and fearfully augmented the public burdens, and which was now revelling in affluence and the enjoyments of luxury, while they themselves were pining in the penury of humble life.*

5. Great magnitude of the deficits in the revenue.

Add to this, that flourishing as was the state of the Exchequer, so far as the income was concerned, it was by no means in an equally satisfactory state when the balance of receipts and expenditure was taken into consideration. On the contrary, the floating debt and annual deficit, which had gone on constantly increasing ever since 1836, and which all the artifices of supplemental credits and budgets had not been able entirely to conceal, had now swelled to such an amount that they had become a source of serious embarrassment to the Government. The cost of the military preparations of M. Thiers, in contemplation of the war in 1840, and on the fortifications of Paris, had also been immense. This floating debt in 1833 amounted to 255,000,000 francs (£10,000,000), and more. It now amounted, in 1841, to 1,000,000,000 francs, or £40,000,000, of which no less than 175,000,000 francs, or £7,000,000, had been incurred since the formation of the administration of M. Thiers, on 1st March 1840.

* The official statistics of France in 1841 exhibit the following extraordinary state of the landed interest of the country :—

	Francs.	£
Territorial revenue in all, . . .	1,580,579,000	or 63,020,000
Taxes paid by land, . . .	562,094,684	„ 22,800,000
Interest of mortgages and *hypothèque*, .	561,538,288	„ 22,900,000
	456,964,732	„ 18,720,000

—*Stat. de la France*, vol. vii. p. 91; and REGNAULT, *Histoire de Huit Ans de Louis Philippe*, vol. ii. p. 276. The separate landed properties in France at this period were 10,860,000, but it was calculated that they belonged to only 6,000,000 separate proprietors. Supposing this to be the case, and allowing 3½ to each family, we have 21,000,000 human beings among whom this £18,720,000 was divided, or less than 20s. a-head to each.

This deficit was brought to a perfect climax by a loan of 531,000,000 francs (£21,400,000), contracted in 1841, to be expended *on railways* in 1841 and 1842. In a word, the finances of the country were in the most alarming situation; and it was evident to all that Government, pressed by the dread of insurrection among the working classes, was resolved at all hazards to keep them for the time in full employment, and for this purpose to encroach to any extent, by anticipation, on the credit or resources of future years.[1]

[1] Regnault, i. 125, 129; Ann. Hist. 1841, 237, 248.

6. Increasing discontent of the working classes.

The existence and spread of those feelings of discontent among the working classes was the more dangerous that they had no *legitimate mode of expression.* Government deemed society safe, and the danger over, because the voice of treason or ultra-Republicanism was not heard in the Chamber, and insurrection no longer stalked abroad in the metropolis. So far, however, was this from being the case, that the danger was only the greater and more serious from no sound expressive of it being heard in the legislature, and no visible symptom of it appearing in the streets. As in England, during the twelve years which intervened between the contraction of the currency and the Reform Bill, discontent was daily increasing among the people, because the expression of it could not find vent through their representatives. The cry was not against the Sovereign, but the Chamber; it was not the dethronement of the monarch, but the *Reform of the Representation,* which was demanded; and this, of course, was not expected from the legislature itself, till absolutely constrained to it by external pressure. Thus, while the schism between the Government and the people was daily becoming greater, neither the debates in the Chamber nor the disorders in the streets gave any symptoms of its approach; and the future of France at this period is to be looked for neither in the proceedings of Parliament, nor the sentences of the courts of justice, but in the speeches at the Reform Banquets.[2]

[2] De Carné, ii. 238, 243.

Nothing, accordingly, presents so remarkable a contrast

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

7. Trifling subjects in debate in the Chamber, and serious objects of Thiers.

as the debates in the Chambers and the ideas fermenting in the great mass of the people, between 1841 and 1847. If you read the speeches in the Chamber, the objects in dispute appear, for the most part, of the most trivial and insignificant description. They were not so much about things as words. Verbal amendments to addresses, or to ministerial bills, which, without involving any real difference of opinion, might afford a touchstone to the parties measuring their strength in the struggle for possession of the ministerial portfolios, were the great objects of contention. Upon them the rival orators, candidates for power, exhausted all their eloquence, and frequently, in support of their respective sides, they appealed to abstract principles, and gave expression to warm and eloquent declamation. But excepting on the few occasions when important questions of *foreign* policy were brought forward for discussion, the vote was almost always taken on a verbal amendment, involving no material political principle. On all questions of social or internal interest, the Chamber appeared to be substantially unanimous. Protection to native industry, diminution of public expenditure, enlarged provision for popular education, resistance to any further extension of the suffrage, or increase of ecclesiastical influence, were inscribed alike on the banners of the Liberal and the Conservative parties. The only real question between them was, whether M. Guizot or M. Thiers was to have the disposal of the 130,000 offices in the gift of the Executive, and on which side were the 166 placemen in the Chamber of Deputies to sit. And this was to be determined, not by divisions on any great social or political questions, but by such a skilful framing of the royal speech, or the amendment, as might succeed in detaching ten votes from the Right or the Left centre, either of which was sufficient to determine the fate of an administration, and with it the disposal of all offices and emoluments.[1]

[1] De Carné, ii. 280, 321, 238.

While these were the objects of parliamentary division,

and the prizes of parliamentary contest, very different subjects of thought were beginning to agitate the public mind in the immense mass of the working classes. Despairing of making their voice heard in a bourgeois-elected legislature, the workmen took their case into their own hands, and encouraged each other in those socialist and communist doctrines which are always agreeable to the sons of labour, and which they hoped, on the first favourable opportunity, to assert by force of arms in the streets. Experience had taught them where their real enemy was to be found; it was no longer on the throne, but in the legislature. A Chamber of Deputies elected by 150,000 of the richest proprietors in France was actuated only by one interest, and could be expected to support only one set of measures. Most of all, being almost entirely the representative of manufacturing and commercial wealth, it was seen on all occasions to show a determined front against any measures calculated, directly or indirectly, to diminish the share in the profits of labour enjoyed by the masters, and augment that falling to the workmen. Thus the composition and character of the legislature insured alike, and at the same time, the spread of socialist principles among the working classes, and of devotion to the interests of capital in the legislature; and a revolution, based on the principle of *Liberté, Egalité, et Fraternité*, was, sooner or later, rendered inevitable from the moment when the bourgeois class became intrenched in the legislature by the convulsion which overthrew the legitimist monarchy.

8. Objects of general thought and interest at the same time.

9. Cause to which this divergence was owing.

This deplorable divergence of the objects of parliamentary contention from those of public and general interest was mainly owing to this, that the different classes of society were not represented in the legislature. As, with a few trifling exceptions, the immense majority of the voters was composed of those who paid direct taxes of two hundred francs and upwards yearly, *that class alone was represented.* It was a most important portion of society,

CHAP. XLIV. 1841.

but it was not the whole, and it was the less entitled to the entire direction of the State, that its interests were in many respects at variance with those of the other classes. The aristocracy and greater proprietors were almost entirely unrepresented; not a dozen members out of 460 belonged to that class. The aristocracy, profoundly alienated by the Revolution of 1830, and usurpation of Louis Philippe, most unwisely retired altogether from the arena of parliamentary conflict, and awaited, in the solitude of the few châteaus which still remained to them, or in the haughty and exclusive circles of the Faubourg St Germain, the return they expected, by the general concurrence of the nation, to legitimate government. The clergy were alike unrepresented; a few adherents of the Church were grouped round the standard of M. DE MONTALEMBERT, who already had given token of those talents which have since rendered him so eminent; but their number was too small to give them any real weight in the Assembly. The ecclesiastics, as a body, aware of the unpopularity of the Jesuits, which had early been evinced both under the Restoration and the present regime, kept aloof, and, without seeking to withstand the Government, simply awaited, like the nobles, the arrival of better times, when the Church might again cause its voice to be heard. Above all, the working classes were utterly and entirely unrepresented, and this was the more unfortunate that their interests were often directly at variance with those of their masters, in whom the last Revolution had vested the supreme direction of affairs. All this was the direct consequence of that Revolution having been effected by the *bourgeoisie*, and, of course, worked out exclusively to their profit, and of the national representation having been fixed in 1814 on that principle of uniform representation which, apparently the most just, is in reality the most unjust of foundations, and inevitably ends in vesting the entire government of the State in a single class of society, and that the lowest portion of the enfranchised class.

The Chamber of Peers afforded no remedy for these evils.

The Chamber of Peers, as then constituted, afforded no counterpoise whatever to the fatal preponderance of the bourgeois class in the legislature. Deprived for the most part, by the confiscations of the Revolution, of their hereditary estates, it was impossible that they could, under the most favourable circumstances, have possessed anything like the influence or consideration which the English House of Peers possessed, in which the greater part of the landed property in the kingdom was still vested. But the sway which they had possessed, in a certain degree, from the weight of historic names, had been seriously weakened by the fatal measure, the great triumph of the Revolution of the Barricades, which deprived them of their hereditary seats in the legislature. The moment this was done, they became a mere set of titled favourites of court, or partisans of ministers; and any little respect which might have still clung to them was entirely destroyed by the large creations of peers which signalised the advent to power of every successive administration. From that time, the Upper Chamber was to all practical purposes, and as an independent branch of the legislature, powerless, and the entire direction of Government was vested in the bourgeois-elected Chamber of Deputies. It would have been incomparably better, when their hereditary character came to an end, to have transformed them, as in America, into an elective Upper House, chosen by a different and more elevated class of voters than the Lower. Representing the dignitaries of the Gallican Church, and the royalist proprietors in La Vendée, Britanny, and the south, they might still have enjoyed some consideration, and in some cases even acted as a check upon the other branches of the Government. Chosen by the Sovereign, and augmented by large additions of party-men as the rival administrations came to power, they possessed no weight whatever in the community, and served no other purpose but that of the Roman Senate in the days of

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

Byzantine servitude, to register the obnoxious decrees of the Sovereign.

11. Extreme danger of this state of things.

Founded on such an exclusive basis, the representative system, so far from being a blessing, must prove a positive curse; instead of lessening, it materially aggravates the dangers which threaten society. It induces a false feeling of security on the part of Government when it is slumbering on the surface of a volcano; it speaks peace to the rulers of men when there is no peace. Representatives of all classes are not only the constitutional organs by which they make their wants known, and their demands attended to by the Government, but they are *the safety-valves which let off their ill humours.* Reposing in fancied security on the idea of a *national* representation, M. Guizot forgot it was only the representation of a single class in the State, and that the discontents of the other classes were just in proportion to the unanimity of opinion on all important questions which it exhibited. The dreams of the Socialists were unheard in the Chamber; the mighty voice of the Gallican Church no longer resounded in the State; but these interests, though silent, were not extinct, and the working classes embraced them the more readily, and clung to them with the more fervent devotion, that they formed their last refuge against the tyranny with which they were threatened by the Government and the bourgeois class upon which it rested in the legislature.

12. Great mistake committed in the national education.

Another error had been committed by this bourgeois legislature in the direction they had given to the influence to which they had subjected the national system of education. It is a mistake to suppose that the Chambers during the reign of Louis Philippe did nothing for general education. On the contrary, they had done a great deal, and established a system which, when it comes into full operation, will go far to take away the reproach of ignorance which has so long attached to a large part especially of the rural population in France. By means of public taxes they had assigned very considerable revenues

to the purposes of education, and constructed for its cultivation a very extensive system. By the law of 28th June 1833, three *centimes* on each franc of valued rent were levied in each commune, and a *centime* and a half in each department, besides large grants in addition from the public treasury; and these sums were devoted specially to the support of education. With the ample funds thus provided they constructed 35,000 primary schools, endowed an equal number of schoolmasters, and established 76 normal schools, to instruct them in their important duties. So far they did well, and made a mighty step in the progress of civilisation, which entitles them to the lasting thanks of all the friends of mankind.[1] *

[1] De Carné ii. 190; Villemain, Rapport sur l'Instruction Primaire, Nov. 1, 1841; Moniteur.

13. Its irreligious character led it to run into Socialism.

Had this great establishment been connected with any system of religious belief, it would have satisfied the wants of the human mind, and proved a lasting blessing to society. But, unfortunately, the prevailing object of terror, especially with the bourgeois class at the time when that system was established, and, indeed, during the whole reign of Louis Philippe, neutralised all these blessings, and caused them, in the first instance at least, to turn into curses. The Jesuits had been the general objects of apprehension during the reign of Charles X.; and the friends of freedom were in an especial manner jealous of the undisguised efforts they were making to get entire possession of the education of the rising generation. This dread was the more general and intense among the bourgeois class, that education thus directed would tend obviously to increase the influence of the priests instead of augmenting their own, by giving them powerful supporters in the humbler ranks of society. Influenced by this feel-

* The law of 28th June 1853 required the communes only to settle on the schoolmasters the *minimum* of 200 francs (£8) a-year, to which the departmental contributions were added; but the whole did not exceed 400 francs, or £16 yearly. The teachers in all were 40,524, of whom 24,256 were married; and the members of the different religious congregations were 2136 of this number. —*Rapport sur l'Instruction Publique*, 1st Nov. 1841, par M. VILLEMAIN. *Monitcur*, 1st Nov. 1841.

CHAP. XLIV. 1841.

ing, the Legislature carefully separated education from religion; and the schools of the "University," supported by public assessment and the State, were entirely subjected to lay direction, and admitted no intermixture even of ecclesiastical influence. By so doing they averted without doubt one danger, but they increased another still more serious and threatening. In their terror at falling under the government of the Jesuit with his cowl, they forgot the Socialist with his blouse. Mankind can never for any length of time dispense with religious influence, which is the chief engine by which the great majority must always be governed; and the only effect of separating primary education from the Church, was to cause the working classes, especially in towns, to *make a religion of Socialism*, and embrace its doctrines, not only with the zeal of a political party, but with the fervour of devout enthusiasm.[1]

[1] De Carné, ii. 189, 192.

14. Blindness of the Government and the higher classes to the Socialist dangers.

The Government, however, remained utterly blind as to the extent to which these feelings and principles prevailed. M. Guizot, fixing his eye on the Council of State and the Chambers, where such doctrines were discarded as soon as introduced, persisted in maintaining that no change was called for; that Reform was a mere party toy got up for factious purposes to embarrass or displace the Government; and that the liberties of the nation being now fully secured, unbending resistance was all that was required to baffle the efforts of the extreme Liberals and Revolutionists. So far did this illusion go that it was shared even by the Conservative and Royalist leaders, who, finding their most powerful and successful enemy in the bourgeois class, openly countenanced the most wild and extravagant doctrines of the Socialist school. By so doing they flattered themselves they would succeed in conciliating the working masses, and secure their support in any contest which might ensue with the middle class, at present in possession of power.[2] The thing was done, and the Revolution of 1848 proclaimed its results;

[2] De Carné, ii. 229, 231.

a warning to those who think that the working classes are the natural allies of the higher, and that a *Tory democracy* is the best guarantee against the evils of the undue ascendancy of the middle ranks of society.

15. Corruption and influence became the great engine of Government.

Thus blind to the dangers with which they were threatened, the Government of Louis Philippe persisted in their system of governing France by means of the Chamber and the army, and by a profuse distribution of the immense patronage at the disposal of the Executive. M. Guizot put in practice his favourite maxim, that "real progress, in a certain stage, consists in resistance to further change." The bourgeois class, whose ideas he represented, cordially supported these views; having gained the command of the State, they were in no hurry to share their dominion with others. The prevailing egotism and thirst for gain, which invaded all classes, with the railway mania of 1844 and 1845, favoured to a wish the Government system of ruling by influence. In France, as in England, at this period, the thirst for gold, roused to a perfect frenzy by the rise in railway shares and the rapid fortunes made by fortunate speculators on the *bourse*, had become so general and violent as to have absorbed the entire national mind, and superseded almost every other object of desire in a large portion of the people. Government, charmed at any change which took the pressure even for a time off themselves, gave every possible encouragement to the prevailing mania; and a large portion, as already shown, of the public debt (£27,000,000) had been contracted to set on foot the all-absorbing speculations. When the minds of men were in this state, and every other passion was absorbed by one, and that of a selfish character, it became comparatively an easy task, for the time, for a Government possessed of immense patronage, to rule the State. But exactly in the same proportion was the danger of violent discontent breaking out, if the prevailing passion came to be thwarted, and the numerous speculations by

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

which every one hoped to make a fortune proved to be the certain means by which the greater part of them were to lose one.

16. The Liberals exert all their efforts to discredit the Government.

Taught by bitter experience, the ruling Liberals of France, during the last seven years of Louis Philippe's reign, entirely changed their method of attack upon the Government. They no longer thought of openly assailing a power possessed of a decisive majority in the Chambers, supported by a numerous and faithful army, and resting on a girdle of strong forts encircling the metropolis. Despairing of success in an open assault on a monarchy thus intrenched, and taught by the repeated failures they had already experienced, as well in the streets as in the courts of law and the Chambers, they bent all their efforts to one object, and that was to DISCREDIT IT IN GENERAL OPINION. The tactics pursued were, to represent the Government on all occasions—in the press, at public banquets, in the daily journals—as utterly and irretrievably corrupt, and the State as ruled by a combination of greedy electors, shameless representatives, and barefaced ministers, who for their own selfish purposes maintained peace at any hazard, and ignominiously surrendered themselves to the dictation of England, the ancient rival and eternal enemy of France. It must be confessed that several revelations which the proceedings in the courts of law made at this period, as well as some diplomatic transactions, gave too much countenance to these reproaches, and sufficiently demonstrated that, whatever benefits France may have gained by its revolutionary governments during fifty years, purity in the administration of public affairs could not be reckoned among the number. On the contrary, it may safely be affirmed that, characterised as it was by great material prosperity, there is no period in French history when the administration of affairs was so generally based on corruption, and selfishness so much pervaded every department of the State, as that which elapsed from the accession of M. Guizot to power to the fall of Louis

Philippe. It may be conceived what a handle this discreditable state of affairs afforded to the declamation of a numerous party embracing the greater part of the talent in the State, at present excluded from all this lucrative patronage, and which was desirous of overthrowing the present dispensers of it, in the hope that on the next change its distribution would fall into their own hands.

17. Louis Blanc's picture of France at this period.

An eloquent liberal writer, himself in the outset a great supporter of the Revolution of 1830, has left the following picture of the state of society engendered by its success: "Whatever may have been the baseness of Rome under the Cæsars, it was equalled by the corruption in France in the reign of Louis Philippe. Nothing like it had ever been witnessed in history. The thirst for gold having gained possession of minds agitated by impure desires, society terminated by sinking into a brutal materialism. Talent, energy, eloquence, genius, virtue itself, were devoted to no other end but the amassing of a fortune. Renown acquired by money, was turned only to increasing it. Literary or scientific, military or civil, everything was venal; glory itself had its price. O the degradation, never to be forgotten, of that noble France, which had furnished to ancient times their most illustrious chevaliers, and to modern their brightest genius, their most heroic martyrs! Everything was brought to the market; suffrages counted by crowns. They made, as in a new species of bazaar, a scaffolding of venal consciences where honour was bought and law sold. This fearful degradation of France was not the work of a day. Since 1830 the formula of selfishness, 'every one by himself and for himself,' had been adopted by the Sovereign as the maxim of states, and that maxim, alike hideous and fatal, had become the ruling principle of government. It was the device of Louis Philippe, a prince gifted with moderation, knowledge, tolerance, humanity, but sceptical, destitute either of nobility of heart or elevation of mind, the most experienced corrupter of the human race that

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

ever appeared on earth. It resulted from his government, that during eighteen years the poison was let in slowly, drop by drop, from high places, in an unobserved but continual flow. In the latter years of the reign of Louis Philippe every one surrendered himself with his eyes shut to the torrent of corruption. If a revolution was vaguely apprehended by a few, it was only when Louis Philippe was dead, and every one replied by a shrug of the shoulders to those who said, 'this silence is fatal, this repose is ominous, death is germinating beneath dishonour.'"[1] Unquestionable evidence proves that the picture thus drawn by Louis Blanc was too well founded. But it is equally true, what he has not said, that corruption was thus universal, because preceding revolutions had both extinguished all elevated feelings in the majority of the nation, and left the Government no other mode of ruling it but by a constant appeal to selfish desires.

[1] L. Blanc, Revolution de 1848, 2, 3, 5.

18. Spread of Socialist principles, and their origin.

The second engine for effecting the overthrow of the Government, which was worked during the concluding years of the reign of Louis Philippe, was by the incessant spread of Socialist principles among the working classes. Two causes contributed to the immense success with which this attempt was attended. The first was, the profound feeling of discontent which had arisen from the failure of all previous convulsions to effect any real amelioration in the condition of that portion of society. This the Socialist demagogues universally ascribed to their having not gone far enough; stopped short at the precise point where real improvement in their condition would have been effected. The capitalist was their real enemy, even more so than the bondholder and tax-gatherers were of the class of proprietors. No social amelioration could be expected till this monster that preyed on their vitals, and reft from them more than half the fruits of their toil, was abolished, and by the general introduction of the principle of *association*, the entire profits of labour were divided among those actually engaged in it.

The next cause which contributed to the immense spread of Socialist principles at this period was, the real and most serious grievance immediately affecting the wages of labour, arising from the inadequacy of the currency. This evil, which has been the subject of such ample commentary in the preceding chapters in its application to Great Britain, was still more sorely felt in France, from the want of any bank-notes in that country below 200 francs (£8), and the consequent entire dependence of the population, so far as the wages of labour were concerned, on a metallic currency, seriously diminished by the injury done by the South American Revolution to the mines of the precious metals in those regions. It was an evil, too, which was attended by this peculiar and aggravating circumstance, that it was increased by the growth of transactions, and the augmented numbers and industry of the people. The consequence of this was, that while more money was every day required to meet the necessities of the nation, no more could be obtained, and consequently what was in circulation rose in value, and everything else, and with it the wages of labour proportionally fell. The working classes felt this, and felt it sorely, but they did not know to what it was owing, and ascribed it all, at the suggestion of their demagogues, to the middle classes who had usurped the government, and, by the odious principle of competition, were daily wrenching more from the wages of labour, and adding to the profits of stock, to their own great benefit and the general ruin.

19. Which was aided by the want of an adequate currency.

The influence and predominance of these causes appeared in the clearest manner in France, during the summer of 1840, when M. Thiers was in power, being the precise period when, from the same circumstances, distress and discontent were most rife in the British Islands, and the Whig Ministry was about to fall a sacrifice to their intensity. Combinations to effect a rise of wages were then almost universal in all the trades of the metropolis and

20. Which led to a general demand for Parliamentary Reform.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

other great towns, and as usual in such cases, came at length to be attended with serious intimidation and violence. The democratic leaders skilfully took advantage of this state of things to urge upon the excited and suffering working classes the belief that there was but one remedy for their manifold evils, and that was Parliamentary Reform. Once admitted into the legislature, they assured them they would have the remedy for the evils under which they suffered in their own hands. The combination of masters, by whom they were oppressed, would then yield to the aroused might of millions. Till that was effected, all attempts to ameliorate their condition by a bourgeois-elected representation, which was enriched by their labour, and interested in beating down its remuneration, would prove nugatory. So sedulously was this doctrine inculcated, so exactly did it fall in with the prevailing idea of the age, that it obtained universal credit with the working classes; and the *National* newspaper gave expression to the general feeling when it contained these words, on the 7th May 1840: "At this moment, reform appears to all the world, and even to the Chamber itself, the inevitable result of the disordered state of society."[1]

[1] National, May 7, 1840; Regnault, Hist. de Huit Ans, 1840-48, i. 156, 157.

21. Strong feeling excited in regard to the subservience of France to England.

It is justly observed by M. de Carné, in his very able and interesting history of representative institutions in France, that although the French people are, like every other, more in reality affected by domestic alterations than foreign events, yet it is much more easy to excite them by the latter than the former, so that more changes in French history are to be ascribed to this influence than to internal suffering. The case is just the reverse in England: foreign events are there chiefly interesting as they affect domestic well-being and comfort. The reason is to be found in the opposite character of the two people. Essentially military and aggressive in their nature, the French are actuated by no passion so strongly as the love of glory. The desire for equality itself is but an emanation from it. Men sought to be equal that they might start abreast in the

race for distinction. The most popular monarchs who have ever sat upon their throne—Clovis, Philip Augustus, Henry IV., Louis XIV., Napoleon—were those who ministered most strongly to, and gratified most completely, this prevailing desire. The English are not insensible to military glory, and at times feel it as strongly as their neighbours; but it is not their prevailing passion. With them it is the exception, not the rule. With the French it is the rule, not the exception. It may readily be conceived what a handle the treaty of July 1840 afforded to an Opposition whose main reliance was on discrediting the Government in general opinion, and knew that they could never do this so effectually as by representing it as the creature and the vassal of England. The announcement of that treaty had thrilled the national heart as the sound of a trumpet; the threatened invasion of France, in 1793, had scarcely roused the patriotic feelings more strongly. The ministry of M. Thiers, which went out on that question, carried with it the sympathies and gratitude of the nation. That of M. Guizot, which succeeded it on the footing of accommodation with the European powers, like the dynasty of the Bourbons at the Restoration, carried the mark of Cain on its forehead. This, accordingly, formed the second great ground on which the Liberals sought to rouse the national feelings against the Government; and it was difficult to say whether the cry of internal corruption or external humiliation resounded most loudly, or excited most violently the vast and unrepresented classes of the community.[1]

[1] Regnault, i. 157, 158; De Carné, Hist. Rap. ii. 231, 232.

22. Different object on which the attention of Government was set.

In the midst of these grave and serious dangers, it was lamentable to behold how entirely the attention of Government and the legislature was fixed on objects which, however important or laudable in themselves, unhappily ran directly counter to the general feeling and wishes. Seated on a throne founded on a revolt of the middle classes, and supported in the streets by their arms, in the legislature by their representatives, Louis Philippe held with invin-

CHAP. XLIV. 1840.

cible tenacity to two opinions: the first, that it was by sedulous attention to their material interests that their attachment could alone be secured; the second, that the real enemy, both of himself and them, was to be found in the anarchical faction which sought to subvert the existing Government, in order to establish themselves on its ruins. It was by external peace that the first was most likely to be promoted; by internal resistance that the last could alone be coerced. Thus a fixed policy, both external and internal, was in a manner forced upon the Government by the circumstances of its origin and present situation; and that policy, however beneficial in many respects both to France and to Europe, was unfortunately one which daily estranged it more and more from the great numerical majority of the nation, and thwarted more violently their two prevailing passions—the desire of equality and the thirst for glory.

23. Position and movements of the Catholic clergy.

While this was the condition of society and views of parties during the reign of Louis Philippe, another influence, overlooked at the time in the vehemence of political strife, was quietly and unobtrusively extending its sway over a large portion of the people. The CHURCH, which had made so many attempts to regain its political influence in the latter years of the reign of Charles X., and so powerfully contributed to his fall, driven from the field of conflict by the Revolution of 1830, withdrew altogether from the strife, and abandoning, for the time at least, the visions of temporal ambition, devoted itself exclusively to the discharge of its religious functions. Respectful towards the possessors of power, it asked nothing from them, and sought only to extend the blessings of the Christian faith among the immense, and in great part suffering, flocks intrusted to its charge. It surrendered none of the rights it formerly enjoyed, but simply kept them in abeyance, and reserved their assertion for future times. Immense was the effect of this change in augmenting its influence, especially in the rural popula-

tion. Detached from the jealousies and asperities of political ambition, no longer ostensibly interfering either in the government, the legislature, or the education of youth, the Church escaped from the vindictive abuses of its enemies, and in solitude and silence regained its influence over the people.

24. Speech of M. Arago on Parliamentary Reform. June 12.

Following out the plan of agitating for Parliamentary reform, and making that the great lever which was to displace the Ministry and overturn the Government, several political banquets took place, in the course of the summer of 1840, which elicited speeches from the leading Liberal characters of the metropolis, that clearly evinced both the extension of the movement and the direction it was taking. At a great one held in the twelfth arrondissement, when M. Lafitte was present, M. Arago said: "The efforts we have made in favour of electoral reform, in former days, cannot receive a more flattering recompense than that which we now enjoy, nor our future exertions a more exciting stimulus. Let us not deceive ourselves; the task we have undertaken is arduous; it will require all our perseverance. But the end is glorious; in such a case, to estimate the cost or pains would be a dereliction of national duty.

25. Continued.

"Some there are who are discouraged at the result of a recent discussion in the Chamber. What say they?—a year of efforts, 240,000 signatures to the petitions have terminated only in a debate of two hours, in interruptions without end, explosions of anger, ill-natured inuendoes, and a vote, all but unanimous, against any modification, even the most inconsiderable, of the electoral law. Can any one, then, have the simplicity to expect any other result? In what country, in what age, has privilege ever consented to abandon the positions which it occupies, without a vigorous attempt to defend them? For my part, I laboured under no such illusion; I never expected any other result than what has actually occurred. I must add, however, that if we are to judge from the violence

CHAP. XLIV. 1840.

of the diatribes to which we have been exposed, our strokes have been well directed. Is it nothing to have described in the tribune the cruel sufferings which millions of our fellow-countrymen are enduring—to have caused these words, *prophetic of the future*, to be heard in the Chamber, '*We must organise labour?*' Is it nothing to have proved, by numerous examples, that the large portion of our non-military population, at present deprived of civil rights on account of its pretended incapacity, has given to the world incomparable mechanics, illustrious writers, great poets, and the most renowned generals of our revolutionary wars? No, my fellow-citizens! the campaign we have gone through has not been sterile in results. Can the Reformers refuse to close their ranks when they have heard the minister of the 1st March (M. Thiers) declare that men, as men, have no rights; after noting the historian prime-minister forget the celebrated words of Bossuet, 'There are primary truths, against which whoever strives only wounds himself;' and the still more memorable fact, that an Assembly, celebrated by its knowledge and the eloquence of its members, decided, after the example of the famous American Congress, that the declaration of the rights of man should *precede* the formation of the constitution?

26. Continued.

"I say it in the most profound conviction of my soul, the only sure and safe remedy which I can discern for the evils which are consuming us, is reform. Would you ameliorate the condition, at present so precarious, of the working classes? Demand reform! It is by reform that public works can alone be directed to objects of general utility; that merit can take the lead of mediocrity and favouritism; that we can get out of that ocean of intrigue, egotism, avidity, and corruption, in which the country is now labouring; and that the French nation can resume the rank which belongs to it as a great nation. Such are the effects of reform considered as a means; let us not

disdain it, at the same time, as an end. Everything which can elevate the majority of the nation in its own eyes, engender and develop noble sentiments, efface from our laws insulting distinctions, is worthy of the attention of every good citizen, for our country, our dear France, will profit by them.

27. Concluded.

"There is one class in the country which is the prey of peculiar suffering, and that is the manufacturing. That evil, rely upon it, will continually go on increasing. Small capitals in these branches of industry cannot contend with large capitals; industry which is exercised with the aid of machines will always have the advantage over industry which works only with the natural strength of men; the capital which puts in motion powerful machines will always crush that which makes use only of little ones. There is here a cruel evil, to which it is necessary to apply a remedy. Murmur at the expression as some will, there is a necessity to organise labour —to modify in some respects the actual condition of industry; and if you say there is something monstrous in that idea, I answer that the Chamber of Deputies have already entered upon that career when they have considered a law to regulate the labour of children in manufactories. But do not expect such views from the Chamber as at present constituted. Hear what a man who knows them, and who has always been applauded at the tribune, says of the middle classes: M. Guizot says, 'The bourgeois have no turn for great enterprise. When fortune throws them into circumstances where they become necessary, they feel disquieted, embarrassed; responsibility troubles them; they feel out of their sphere, and would gladly re-enter it; they will readily come to terms.' Gentlemen, these words of M. Guizot contain the condemnation of the present electoral system in France.[1] Our country may ere long find itself involved in great events, and the political destinies of the country

[1] National, June 11, 1840; Regnault, i. 160, 169, 171.

CHAP. XLIV. 1840.

ought not to be *exclusively* intrusted to the hands of those who will be embarrassed by them—who will treat on easy terms."

28. Answer of M. Thiers: May 16.

It may readily be supposed that, among the willing and enthusiastic hearers of M. Arago at the Reform Banquet, there was no one to controvert the principles contained in these eloquent words. But when the petitions on the subject were presented in the Chamber of Deputies on the 16th May, M. Thiers made a speech which may be considered as presenting the opposite side of this great debate, "We are often told," said he, "of the national sovereignty, as if by that were meant the sovereignty of mere numbers. I affirm that that doctrine is the most fatal in the world. In constitutional language, when you speak of the national sovereignty, you mean, and can only mean, the sovereignty of the King and the two Chambers expressing the sovereignty of the nation by regular votes—by the exercise of their constitutional rights. I know of no other national sovereignty. Whoever comes to the door of this Assembly, and says, 'I have a right,' is legally wrong; for there are no rights but such as the law has conferred.

29. Concluded.

"Is it not evident that, in the unlimited extension of the suffrage which is proposed, the advocates of such a change are themselves obliged to admit some limitation? They speak of thirty-four millions of inhabitants in France. You speak of that large number, and confessedly you are obliged to reduce the numbers of qualified persons to eight millions. Whence the necessity of this great reduction? Because you must deduct the women, minors, fatuous, and insane persons. You exclude certain classes by reason of natural necessity, admitted by all nations. You exclude certain classes by the force of reason and the necessity of the case; we exclude them in the name of the law."[1]

[1] Moniteur, May 17, 1840; Regn. 161, 162.

It is evident to every one who dispassionately considers the subject, that M. Arago had the better in this

30. Reflections on this debate.

debate, and that if the argument in opposition to universal suffrage rested on no better grounds than those stated by M. Thiers, the demand for it would be irresistible. To say that certain classes are not entitled because they are excluded from it by the law, is an argument which would go to vindicate any imaginable legal electoral abuse, and would preclude legislative reform even in the most despotic countries where it was most loudly called for. It is evident that, in resting his case on so narrow and untenable a ground, M. Thiers was influenced by his habitual respect for revolutionary principles, and overawed by the dread of the majority which is shared by all who adopt them. He did not venture to say that the majority of the nation must be excluded from the suffrage by reason of their not being qualified by nature to exercise it; what he said was, that they were excluded by positive law. This ground is wholly untenable; no man will ever successfully meet the revolutionary argument founded on natural right, but by going back to equally fundamental principles. The real answer to M. Arago's argument is, that mankind are *not equal* by Nature, but, on the contrary, *enormously unequal.* Some have the intellectual strength of giants, some the mental weakness of pigmies. Some have the energy which can move mountains, others the feebleness which is turned aside by molehills; some the industry which defies misfortune, others the indolence which sinks under the first difficulty. This is the law of nature, conclusively evinced in the various capacities of men. Society could not exist without it: government has everywhere arisen from the experienced necessity of getting out of the multitudinous rule of mediocrity, and giving authority to the small phalanx of ability. The attempt often fails; the persons chosen prove frequently unworthy; but men cannot exist for an hour without again feeling the first of necessities—that of being governed. Universal suffrage is not a restoration of the rights of men; it is their decisive and ruinous abroga-

CHAP. XLIV. 1840.

tion; for it deprives men of their first right—that of being well governed, and subjects them to the risk of their greatest danger—that of being ruled by fools, or plundered by knaves.

31. Great succession of Reform Banquets. June 14.

The strength of the feeling in favour of Reform, which the general distress of the working classes had produced, was soon evinced in a manner still more alarming to the Government. On the 14th June the National Guard of Paris had been summoned for a great review, and the pageant, extraordinary in these days, excited an unusual degree of interest. When they defiled past the King, several companies of the 4th, 5th, and 6th Legions, and entire battalions of the 8th, with their officers at their head, shouted "Vive la Reforme!" These ominous words, coming from such a quarter, excited a great sensation, which was increased by the proofs of an organisation in the partisans of the movement, which were every day afforded, and by the perpetual holding out of Reform as the only remedy for the sufferings of the working classes. M. Odillon Barrot had now openly joined the section of members in the Chambers who were headed by Arago and Lafitte, and advocated Radical principles and universal suffrage, and this promised to give increased weight and parliamentary influence to their party. The effects soon appeared. France became the theatre of a pacific Reform agitation, very similar to that of the monster meetings which at the same time, and for some years after, shook Ireland to its foundation. Lyons, Bordeaux, Toulon, Metz, Nantes, and most of the great towns of France, had their reform banquets, at which the sentiments emanating from the capital were repeated and exaggerated. At length Government took the alarm; they saw that the docility of the Chamber, chosen by 200,000 electors, was no guarantee for the contentment and tranquillity of the country. The eighth arrondissement, which embraced the Faubourg St Antoine, was preparing a banquet, which

was to take place at St Mandé, near Vincennes, beyond the limits of Paris, on the 14th July, the anniversary of the storming of the Bastile. Above 3000 persons had already accepted the invitations of the committee, embracing 2600 of the National Guard; the ground was hired, and the consent of the mayor of the commune had been obtained to the meeting, when, on the 10th July, an order was issued by the prefect of the police, forbidding any assembly of more than a thousand persons. The committee and officers of the National Guard of the district remonstrated strongly against the interdict, but in vain. The Minister was firm; and the leaders of the movement abandoned their intention and gave up the banquet, contenting themselves with publishing a protest, in which they signalised the measure as "a stretch of authority, inspired by distrust and fear, and founded on an entire abuse of legal enactment." The banquet, however, was not abandoned, but only adjourned till the ensuing month of August.[1]

[1] Regnault, i. 176, 180.

32. Banquet at Chatillon. Aug. 31.

It took place accordingly on the 31st August, in the plain of Chatillon, in a private field, to which the power of the police to interfere did not extend. Six thousand persons were present; the chairman, M. Recart, though he had lost a child only a day before, felt it his duty to preside on the occasion. The speeches were very violent, but perfect order prevailed, and the Government had not the advantage of representing it as a riotous assembly. This banquet, the largest which had yet taken place in France, had an immense influence; and it was immediately followed by others of a similar character at Limoges, Metz, Moulins, Lille, Rouen, Marseilles, Tours, Dijon, La Chatre, Auxerre, Grenoble, Bourges, Perpignan, Toulouse, Le Mans, Blois.[2] At these assemblies, which passed over without riot or anything discreditable, in addition to the usual topic of Reform, as indispensable to elevate the condition and assuage the suffering of the manufacturing operatives, there came

[2] Regnault, i. 185, 186; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 172, 174; Moniteur, Sept. 3, 1840.

CHAP. XLIV.

1840.

latterly to be conjoined the still exciting topics to French patriotism, of the necessity of the change to restore France to its just position among the nations, and avenge the insulting humiliation they had recently received from the treaty of 15th July 1840, which shut it out from any share in the direction of the affairs of Europe.

33. Growing importance of the question of wages.

The immediate cause of this extraordinary effervescence, the precursor of that which eight years afterwards overturned the throne, and during which the seeds were sown which then ripened to maturity, undoubtedly was the miserably low wages to which the manufacturing classes were reduced. The forms of the French Chamber prevented any one from making a motion or bringing on a subject for discussion, except that proposed by the Government; and they were careful not to introduce anything which touched on the wages of labour. But as an amendment, it was not possible always to exclude it; and it was forced on, as it were, when the discussion had begun on widely different subjects. On the 9th May, in the course of a debate on the duties which should be imposed on home-grown sugar from beetroot, M. Gaugieux, a Liberal member, alluded to the "numerous *workmen* who took an interest in this debate." Hardly was the word "workmen" pronounced in the Chamber, when the clamour which arose on all sides was such, that the orator was obliged to descend from the tribune. "You will not," said he, "allow me to speak of workmen; will you then charge yourselves with giving them work?" "We are here," said the president, M. Sauzet, "charged with the making of laws, and not with giving employment to workmen."[1]

1 Moniteur, May 10, 1840; Regnault, i. 184, 186.

34. Speech of M. Arago on the subject.

"Are you then ignorant," said M. Arago in reply, "that it is the first duty of a government to afford means to every able-bodied man of working and earning wages adequate to the support of himself and his family? That is the object of all laws and society; if it is not attained, we had better go back and live in the woods, where the strongest will kill and eat the weakest. Your first duty

as legislators is to attend to this object; to attend to it with patience and perseverance. If lives are lost from lack of the means of engaging in labour or earning bread; if there are intellects which fail in bringing forth their destined fruits for want of instruction, moralities which yield to the pressure of misery, you are responsible for it, for you cannot pretend inability to remove these evils. Neither money nor power are awanting to enable you to be good; and never did a nation provide with so much generosity as France to all the conditions requisite to form a strong government.

35. Concluded.

"Can you shut your eyes to the fact, that the questions of wages and of subsistence are daily becoming more urgent and important for our miserable social order? When the poor are terrified by the competition to which they are exposed by machinery—when they break these machines, or seize a few sacks of flour to save themselves from starving, you address to them all the commonplace phrases on the subject to be found in the books of the economists. But how can you expect that they will attach any weight to your exhortations, when they see from the official journals that the ruling party in the State count their interests as nothing, in discussions falsely styled relating to the public interest? By refusing reform, you negative their claim to political rights: nothing remains but to deny them also all social rights, by declaring that no interest can be recognised in the Chamber but that of an elector or an elected. It is not without reason, therefore, that the Radicals declare that social amelioration can flow only from reform. The evil, they exclaim, is monopoly; the cause of the evil is the vicious organisation of political power. It is absolutely necessary, if we would heal the social wounds, to change in the first instance the base of our political institutions. When this is done, the evil proceeding from it will disappear in its turn. The child of monopoly and of the oppression exercised by capital over labour, misery will diminish

CHAP. XLIV.

1840.

with the disappearance of its parent—with misery, vice—with vice, crime." The movement, stimulated by the distress in which it originated, continued without abatement during the whole summer and autumn. On the

May 24.

24th May, a deputation of a thousand workmen, the representatives of the whole artisans of the capital, waited on M. Arago at his residence in the Observatory, to thank him for the defence of their interests in the Chamber. Arago answered in these words, which subsequent events rendered prophetic: "Your cause—I am wrong—*our* cause, is just; *it will triumph at no distant period.* Ever rely, my dear fellow-citizens, on my warm sympathy, under all circumstances. Believe me, I will never desert the holy mission which has been allotted to me, that of defending with ardour and perseverance the interests of the working classes." [1]

[1] Moniteur, May 10 and 17, 1840; Regnault, i. 186, 189, 191; National, May 28, 1840.

36. Commencement of combination and riot in Paris.

When words of this encouraging description were spoken by the first in intellectual strength and talent to workmen already suffering under an extreme depression of wages, it was impossible that combinations to raise them, and all their consequent evils and disorders, should not take place. This, accordingly, very soon ensued. Combinations, followed by extensive and alarming strikes, took place among all the principal trades of the metropolis, and continued during the whole summer. The journeymen tailors, to the number of three thousand, met and appointed delegates at the Barrier du Roule. The boot and shoe makers, in equal strength, immediately followed their example. The workers in ornamental paper, a very numerous class, struck work in a body, in consequence of a dispute with their employer, M. Seviste, about wages, and remained idle two months. The cabinet-makers in great strength assembled to appoint delegates at the Barrier du Maine, and were violently dispersed, before they had broken into any acts of violence, by a detachment of the municipal guards. Nearly all the trades in Paris soon struck work; the stone-masons met and appointed delegates; the black-

smiths did the same; and as the French law, unlike the English, holds the mere act of striking work in a body an indictable offence, numerous arrests took place, and the prisons were soon filled with parties awaiting their trial. As the persons apprehended were the office-bearers of the different trades, who were generally persons of respectability, their fate excited great commiseration, and was anxiously watched by the whole working classes in the metropolis.

37. Serious riots in September.

At length, in the beginning of September, matters came to a crisis. On the evening of the 5th of that month great crowds of workmen on strike assembled at the Port St Denis and Port St Martin, and as they refused to disperse when summoned to do so by the police, they were assailed by the municipal guard, and great numbers of the most refractory arrested. This only made matters worse; the injustice of being prevented from meeting, when not as yet guilty of any overt act of violence, was so evident, that it brought over numbers to their side who had hitherto been neutral or indifferent. On the evening of the 7th the whole workmen of the Faubourg St Antoine, who had struck work in the morning, assembled in menacing crowds on the place of the Bastile; and in such strength that the town sergeants and municipal guard sought in vain to disperse them. Vast numbers of spectators assembled to witness the struggle, and filled the whole place and adjoining streets, and, for the most part, ere long joined the people. At this moment an omnibus came past; in the twinkling of an eye it was stopped, overturned, the horses taken out, and with some planks and furniture hastily brought out of the adjoining houses, speedily was formed into A BARRICADE. At the sight of that well-known symbol of insurrection, a large body of the municipal guards *à cheval* were brought up, and by a rapid charge succeeded in dispersing the people, and pulling down the barricade before it was entirely completed.[1] At the same time an assemblage of

[1] Regnault, i. 194, 196; Moniteur, Sept. 8, 1840.

CHAP. XLIV. 1840.

1200 workmen in the Place Maubert and the Faubourg St Marceau was dispersed by the police, and the municipal guards everywhere cleared the streets, and would nowhere permit more than a few persons to assemble together.

38. Vigorous measures of Government to suppress the insurgents. Sept. 5 and 7.

Seriously alarmed, the Government now took the most vigorous steps to guard against the danger. The garrison of Paris, already 40,000 strong, was rapidly reinforced during the night by fresh troops, marched in from Versailles, Fontainbleau, St Cloud, Courbevoie, and all the adjoining towns; and at daybreak on the following morning all the principal posts in Paris were strongly occupied. In the place in front of the Hôtel de Ville, in the Carrousel, the Place Louis XV. and Vendôme, on the Pont Neuf, the Marché des Innocents, and the Place of the Bastile, large bodies of troops, horse, foot, and cannon, were placed. The *générale* beat in all the streets to summon the National Guard to their posts; those from the *banlieue* were hurried in as they had been when they rendered such effective service on occasion of the insurrection in the Cloistre de St Méri in 1832. The spirit of insubordination was repressed by this display of military force; and Government, taking advantage of the general alarm, subjected the persons brought to trial to very long periods of imprisonment. On the 12th September forty-six combined workmen were condemned in the short space of three hours; and on the 15th, thirty-three stone-masons were convicted, and sentenced to various periods of imprisonment. All the sentences were confirmed by the Cour Royale on the 1st October. By these severe measures the danger was surmounted for the time; but the root of the malady was not extracted, and it remained festering in the working classes till it at length acquired such strength as to become irresistible.[1]

Sept. 12.

Sept. 15.

[1] Moniteur, Oct. 2, 1840; Regnault, i. 197, 198.

Various causes contributed to produce this general and violent outbreak among the working classes in France at this time; and the recurrence of a similar crisis eight

years after is eminently descriptive of those which were most instrumental in bringing it on. In the first place must be ranked the extreme subdivision of landed property, the result partly of the old consuetudinary custom of the country in some provinces anterior to the Revolution, partly of the effects of that convulsion, which overspread the land, as a similar subdivision of farms had done in Ireland, with a vast and indigent peasantry. In the next place, the want of any *legal* provision for the poor in the country drove the working classes in undue proportion into the towns, where the numerous and magnificent hospitals and public establishments for the relief of suffering promised to afford that succour which they could not find in their own districts. In the third place, owing to the confiscation of the landed estates, and the almost total destruction of commercial wealth and realised capital during the Revolution, the money to be spent in these towns, when the people did arrive there, was much less than it should have been, or than was adequate to take off the surplus hands of the country.

39. Causes which produced this outbreak among the working classes.

But in addition to these, which may be called the permanent causes that lowered the remuneration of labour in France, there were two of temporary influence, but surpassing strength, which operated at the particular time when these disturbances broke out. The first of these was the cessation of the conscription, and of the sanguinary wars of Napoleon, by the peace of 1815. Between 1792 and 1815, four millions of young men had been drawn into the army, and cut off, in France, of whom above a million had perished in the years 1812, 1813, and 1814.[1] These prodigious drains, amounting on an average to above 200,000 a-year, had had a very great effect during the war in producing a scarcity of hands, and consequently elevating the wages of labour, not only while it lasted, but *for twenty years after it had come to an end*, from the lessened number of those who during that period rose up

40. Temporary causes which also concurred.

1 Hist. of Europe, c. lxxxix. § 66, where the numbers are given.

CHAP. XLIV.

1840.

to manhood, from the diminished marriages which had gone on during the war. The conscription all at once ceased in 1812 and 1813 to be productive, because it then came to be levied among the generation whose fathers and mothers were married during the great levy of 1,200,000 men in 1793.[1] The converse of this now took place. In 1840, and a few years preceding, the effect of the cessation of the conscription, and consequent multiplication of marriages from 1815 to 1820, appeared in a great and unexpected increase of young men from 18 to 23 years of age; that is, at the very time when their presence was most likely to affect the labour market and augment the general competition for employment.

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. lxxiv. § 70.

41. Effect of the general monetary crisis.

The second cause of a temporary nature which at this time depressed the wages of labour, and enhanced the competition for employment in France, was the monetary crisis, already made the subject of ample commentary in connection with the history of England during this period.[2] As the drain of the precious metals to the United States, which that in some measure produced, brought both the Bank of England and that of France to the verge of insolvency, the effect was immediate in producing a violent contraction of the currency in both countries, and proportional reduction in the price of commodities of all sorts, and in the general remuneration of labour. The people felt, and felt in the most sensible way, the general depression of wages, but they were ignorant of the causes to which it had been owing; and, guided entirely by the Liberal leaders, ascribed it all to the monopoly enjoyed by the capitalists in the legislature, and the absence of that check upon their encroachments which an extensive measure of parliamentary reform could alone afford.

[2] Ante, c. xxxvii. §§ 4-28.

How much soever Government, supported by a large majority in the Chamber, might despise the impotent clamour of the unrepresented labouring classes, they were too well aware of the danger of "Stomach Rebellions," as Lord Bacon calls them, and violent commotions among the

working classes in the metropolis, not to feel the necessity of doing their utmost to augment the employment which might be afforded to them. The railways presented the most obvious resource in this emergency. Hitherto they had been chiefly if not entirely intrusted, as in Great Britain, to private companies. But whether it was that the management of them had been faulty, or that capitalists were distrustful of the returns to be expected from the lines, they had been for the most part unsuccessful; the requisite subscriptions could not be got, and France was still almost entirely without this great element of modern civilisation. Here, as in everything else in France, it had been found that Government must take the lead, otherwise the undertakings would fall to the ground. One line only of the eight magnificent ones which had been contemplated in 1838, that from Paris to Bâle, had been completed. All the rest were unfinished or abandoned. Even the one from Paris to Orléans had been finished only as far as Juvigny. What rendered this deplorable state of things the more humiliating, and even dangerous to France, was, that all the other Continental states—Prussia, Austria, Saxony, Bavaria—had constructed lines through their territories, which not only threatened to divert a large part of European inland commerce from France, but, in the event of hostilities, might give them a great military advantage, by enabling them to accumulate their forces in a few days against any point of the frontier which they selected for attack.[1]

42. Total failure of the attempt to make private railway lines in France.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 268, 273; Regnault, i. 119, 121.

Impressed with these ideas, Government, soon after the accession of M. Thiers to the head of the administration, resolved to step forward and revive this great branch of national industry by itself undertaking the chief part of the work. The original plan was to take two-fifths of the shares of the chief lines, and to advance the requisite funds at 4 per cent, from the resources of the State. These proposals were very considerably modified in the committee to which they were referred, and were not finally

43. The Government undertake the lines. April 7.

CHAP. XLIV.

1840. June 16.

voted till the 16th June. At length, after a very long discussion, and the consideration of repeated modifications, it was agreed by both Chambers to undertake on the part of Government such engagements as would secure the completion of the principal lines. The Government was to guarantee the interest in advances requisite to complete the Orléans line; to advance funds for those of Bâle and Roanne; to undertake the one from Nismes to Montpellier, and that of Lille and Valenciennes to the Flemish frontier, and to advance 14,000,000 francs (£560,000) towards the completion of that from Paris to Rouen. At the same time, a canal was voted by the Chambers to unite the Aisne and the Marne; the improvement of the navigation of the Saône from Verdun to Lyons was undertaken; and the canal of the Upper Seine completed. Twenty-five millions of francs (£1,000,000) were voted to establish lines of steamers from Havre to New York, from Nantes to Brazil, and from Marseilles to Mexico. The steamboats on these lines were accordingly established, but they have never been able to rival the magnificent steam-packets established by private enterprise in Great Britain, and which have done so much to shorten the passage to the United States, until at length it has been reduced to ten or twelve days.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 268, 271; Regnault, 124, 128.

44. Disastrous state of the finances in consequence.

The burdens thus undertaken by the French Government were, however, attended with very great embarrassment to the Treasury. The budget of 1840, accordingly, exhibited a great and alarming deficit. The estimated expenditure amounted, including 72,000,000 francs for public works, to no less than 1,411,885,000 francs. The revenue was only 1,341,885,000 francs, leaving a deficit of 170,000,000 francs, to be supplied by additions to the floating debt, which already amounted to 700,000,000 francs. This deficit was still farther augmented in the following year, both by a great extension of the railway lines, and the enormous armaments which M. Thiers had prepared to withstand the European coalition, the charges

1841.

of which fell upon that year, though the necessity for them had passed away. On 15th April 1841, M. Humann, the late finance-minister, made a most alarming statement of the finances, which, however, was nowise surprising, seeing that the troops voted amounted to 640,000 men, and the sum required for public works was 534,000,000 francs.[1]

[1] Moniteur, April 15 and 25, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 355, 356.

45. Speech of M. Humann on the finances.

"It is in vain," said M. Humann, "to attempt to disguise the difficulties of our financial situation. The unproductive charges of late years have threatened to become permanent, and assumed a forced place in our budgets. The Grande Livre of the public debt must soon be reopened; the budgets of former years, far from bequeathing to us any resources, daily absorb more of our present funds; and you have to consider a budget commencing and ending with an alarming deficit. The deficit of 1840 was 170,193,780 francs; that of 1841 was still higher,—it amounted to 242,603,288 francs; and as the income of 1842 is only 1,160,516,000, while the expenses of the year will be 1,275,435,000, the financial year of 1842 will present a deficit of 114,936,000 francs. In addition to this, the extraordinary public works require 534,269,000 francs; to which the finance-minister must set his face, with the resources of the budget, the funded debt, and the floating debt. But little can be expected from the last resource, as it is already engaged for 256,000,000 francs of debt contracted anterior to 1833, and which has formed an incubus on the resources of the State ever since that period." To meet these charges, the finance-minister was obliged to contract a loan for 450,000,000 francs in a period of profound peace, besides leaving a floating debt of 81,000,000 to be provided for by Exchequer bills or other temporary expedients. Thus was the Government of Louis Philippe, despite his anxious and strenuous efforts to preserve peace, rapidly approaching a state of insolvency—a striking and painful contrast to the prosperous state of the finances during the Restora-

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

tion. The necessity for these prodigious expenses arose from the unhappy circumstances of its origin. Founded on treason, and a violent revolt of the lower orders against the Government, it was necessarily, in foreign affairs, in a state of antagonism with the great Continental powers, and could only maintain its independence by keeping vast armaments on foot; and in domestic, could not hope to preserve tranquillity, and prevent a second revolution, but by annually making an immense addition to the public debt, to give the working classes that employment which the unaided circumstances of society could not afford.[1]

[1] Rapport, April 15, 1841; Moniteur, April 16; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 355, 256.

46. Untoward commencement of the Ministry of M. Guizot.

Scarcely less unfortunate was the Ministry of the 29th October, from the cloud which overhung its origin. Marshal Soult and M. Guizot succeeded to the helm immediately after the signature of the treaty of 15th July 1840, which was taken as so great an insult by France; and the principle of their administration was concession to the four Powers on a matter in which strenuous resistance was thought indispensable to the national honour. England had been entirely successful in the affairs of the East; her statesmen had shown more courage, capacity, and influence, than those of Louis Philippe. The bombardment of Acre had been as decisive in the Levant as the battle of Waterloo in the West. Indescribable was the sensation which these events produced in France, and weighty the load of opprobrium which they affixed round the necks of the new Ministry, which agreed to the subsequent treaty. In fact, they never altogether recovered it, any more than the Restoration did the stain of entering Paris in the rear of the allied armies. With the usual tendency of men to judge of events by their final result, not the cause which had preceded them, the multitude ascribed the whole disgrace, as they deemed it, of these events, to the minister who had extricated the country from its difficulties, not to him that had plunged it into them; in the same way as they ascribed the shame of the treaty

of Paris to Louis XVIII. and the Duke de Richelieu, who signed it, not to Napoleon, who had rendered that signature unavoidable.

47. Efforts of England for suppression of the slave trade.

This inauspicious commencement of the new Ministry not only imposed on it from the very outset the greatest difficulties, but proved a serious impediment to the measures which the enlightened and pacific Foreign Ministers of France and England, at that time M. Guizot and Lord Aberdeen, were endeavouring to bring about, with a view to alleviating the sufferings of humanity, and preserving the peace of the world. Everything which was done in concert with England was represented as a humiliating concession to a rival power, and a disgraceful acknowledgment of vassalage on the part of France. This feeling extended even to an attempt made by the united cabinets of the Tuileries and St James's to eradicate that infernal traffic, the disgrace of humanity, the slave-trade. To understand how this came about, it must be premised that, after the slave trade had been formally abolished by law in Great Britain, its Government made the most persevering efforts to conclude such arrangements with foreign powers as might tend to the entire and final suppression of that traffic. It has been already mentioned,[1] that so early as 1817 the British Ministry purchased, at the cost of £400,000, a treaty with Spain, agreeing, under certain limitations, to the extinction of the slave trade in Spanish vessels; and they endeavoured, at the same time, to get from the Duke de Richelieu a similar renunciation on the part of France, though unhappily without effect. Afterwards they made the most vigorous efforts to obtain from the Congress of Verona a similar declaration, but could obtain nothing more than a vague act condemnatory of its existence.[2] Though abundantly disposed to be humane in the abstract, the minister of France at that assembly, M. Chateaubriand,[3] was too well aware of the indelible jealousy of England which pervaded his country, to adven-

[1] Ante, c. vii. § 49.

[2] Ante, c. xii. § 16.

[3] Regnault, i. 185, 186; D'Haussonville, Histoire Diplomatique de la France, 1830-48, i. 6, 7.

CHAP. XLIV. 1841.

ture on any efficient practical measures which might really tend to the abolition of the traffic; and it continued to be carried on under cover of the French flag during the whole government of the Restoration.

48. Treaties of 1831 and 1833 with France regarding the slave trade.

Intently set, however, upon effecting the entire abolition of a trade which was a general reproach to Christendom, the British Government made a fresh effort, after the accession of Louis Philippe, to effect this object, and happily on this occasion with more effect. On the 30th November 1831, a convention was signed between France and England, by which the two Governments mutually conceded to each other the right of search within the latitudes necessarily traversed by the slavers in their passage from the coast of Africa to the West Indies, or the American shores. A separate convention was to be signed every year, regulating the number of cruisers which were to be kept on the station by the two nations respectively. By a second convention in pursuance of the former, concluded on 22d March 1833, certain stipulations were mutually agreed to, which provided for the mode in which the vessels deemed liable to seizure should be brought before a judge of the country to which they belonged, and many other details as to the mode of seizure and condemnation. In these mutual stipulations the most entire reciprocity was observed, and nothing was exacted by England from France but what she cordially consented to submit to in her turn. This *mutual* right of visit was totally different from the old right of search claimed by England against neutrals, when she was engaged in actual hostilities with any other power. That was a right *claimed* by one party to search neutral vessels on the high seas for articles contraband of war, and disputed by the other; this was a right, *agreed to by both*, to search vessels of their own subjects, within certain limits, for slaves, without which all attempts to put down the slave trade would of necessity be defeated.[1]

Nov. 30, 1831.

[1] Conventions in Martins' Sup. viii. 192, xi. 241.

These treaties were concluded between Great Britain

and France alone; but it was self-evident that all such conventions would fail in the object for which they were concluded, unless the whole civilised powers concurred in a mutual right of the same description. Any one which refused to recognise it, would soon find the whole slave trade of the world run into their bottoms, or carried on under cover of their flag. England, however, had in the interim made very great efforts to get other powers to go into the same system, and at length with considerable success. By the exertions of her statesmen, Denmark, Sardinia, Sweden, Naples, Tuscany, the Hanse Towns, had been successively induced to enter into similar treaties. Nothing remained to be done but to get the accession of the great powers, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, to a similar convention. But although the cabinets of these powers expressed an entire willingness, and even anxiety, to join in the great work, yet they considered it inconsistent with their dignity to *accede* to a treaty which, without their concurrence, had previously been concluded between other powers. They invited, therefore, the formation of a new treaty, entered into between all the *five* powers, including, of course, France, which by common consent might put matters on an efficient and durable foundation. Great Britain willingly acceded to this proposal, which promised to put the object for which she had so long been contending on the footing of European law; and M. Guizot, on the part of France, gladly joined in the same views, the more especially as it readmitted his country into the European family, from which she had been separated since the treaty of 15th July 1840, and exhibited a proof to the world of the restoration of harmony among the whole European powers. The result was the conclusion of the treaty of 20th December 1841, signed at London by the ambassadors of the five powers, which established, on the most equitable footing, a mutual right of search, with a view to the preventing of the slave trade.[1]

49. Treaty of December 20, 1841, between France and the Allied Powers.

[1] Regnault, ii. 189, 190; Treaty, Dec. 20, 1841; Ibid., 450—App.; Martins, Sup. ix. 482.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

50. Its provisions.

By this treaty, it was provided "that a mutual right of search, on the part of the whole contracting powers, should be conceded with regard to every ship pertaining to the subject of any of the contracting parties, which on reasonable grounds (*des présomptions fondées*) shall be suspected of being concerned in the traffic of negroes, or of having been equipped for that purpose, or having been devoted to that traffic during the voyage when it may be met by any of the cruisers of the said powers; and that the said cruisers might arrest and send the said vessel to be adjudicated upon, in the manner hereinafter specified." Each of the contracting parties was to arm as many cruisers as it deemed expedient, to navigate within the limits agreed on for the suppression of the slave trade; the cruisers of each of the contracting parties were mutually to lend each other assistance in carrying the treaty into execution, and the vessels seized were to be sent to harbours of the nation to which the seized vessel belonged, there to be adjudicated upon, according to the mutual law provided by the treaty. The most minute regulations were laid down for carrying the provisions of the treaty into effect, in the manner least likely to give offence to any of the nations whose vessels were seized; and also as to the articles found on board, which were to be held as *indicia* of being engaged in the slave trade, such as manacles, chains, or wristbands, planks to form a false deck to conceal slaves beneath, a larger supply of water or provisions than was required for the use of the ostensible crew, and many other particulars.[1]

[1] Treaty, Dec. 20, 1041, ut supra.

51. Indignation which the treaty excited in France and America.

Nothing could be more equal, just, or reasonable, than these provisions; and not only were they such as were evidently indispensable for the entire abolition of the abominable traffic in human flesh, but they were such as, when rightly considered, tended to the establishment of that very freedom of the law for which France and the neutral powers had so long contended. For not only

did they establish a *mutual* right of search on the footing of entire reciprocity, without the slightest assumption of superiority on the part of Great Britain over any other power; but as they rested that right on special treaty, applicable to the contracting parties alone, to be exercised only within certain limits, and in a prescribed way, they afforded some countenance to the argument that, even in case of war, neutral vessels could not legally be searched by the cruisers of the belligerent powers but in virtue of some such agreement, expressed or implied, with the power whose vessels were seized. But all these considerations, as well as the obvious importance, and indeed indispensable need, of such a treaty, to secure the abolition of a traffic which was a disgrace to humanity, were overlooked in the jealousy of the powers which were most likely to be affected by it in their maritime operations. This appeared in an especial manner in France and America, the countries in the world next to England which possessed the largest commercial navies. In France one universal cry of indignation burst forth from one end of the country to the other, the moment the obnoxious treaty appeared in the columns of the *Moniteur*. It was worse than Leipsic, a greater disgrace than Waterloo; a bowing the neck to England, for which no precedent was to be found in the former annals of the country; an open abandonment of the object for which all the sovereigns of France, from Louis XIV. to Napoleon, had contended, and which even the Government of the Restoration had refused to concede. So violent was the outcry, so strong the indignation, that, in spite of all the efforts of Sir R. Peel and Lord Aberdeen to get the treaty ratified, the French Government did not venture to take so hazardous a step; and the temper evinced by the Chamber, when the subject came under discussion in the debate on the Address, a few days after the treaty was published, was such, that it was indefinitely adjourned.[1] On their side, the Americans were not slow in taking the same view of

[1] Dec. 27, 1841. Moniteur, Dec. 29, 1841; Regnault, ii. 189, 192; D'Haussonville, ii. 6, 7.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841. Feb. 13, 1842. the treaty, for on the 13th February 1842, their Minister at Paris presented a note to the French Government, remonstrating against the treaty, and representing that, if attempted to be carried into execution by stopping American vessels to verify their alleged nationality, it would inevitably disturb the peace between the two countries.

52. Interdiction of the Polish Banquet. The fixed policy of the democratic leaders to concentrate all their efforts, in order to render the Government unpopular, received a fortunate opportunity for exercise from a measure of police adopted in the end of November, on occasion of a proposed banquet of the Poles in Paris in commemoration of the revolt which, ten years before,

Nov. 29. broke out in Warsaw on the 29th of that month. Such a festival had been annually held since that event without attracting much notice; but on this occasion it excited a more than ordinary attention as it was to be presided over by General Rybinski, the last commander of the Polish army; and M. Arago, Garnier Pagès, Bastide, Buchez, and several other of the leading French radicals, were to take a prominent part in the proceedings. It was interdicted accordingly by the Prefect of Police, upon the ground that it was illegal for any Frenchman to take a part in such an assembly. This stretch of authority, which appears to have been by no means judicious, afforded a fair ground for the declamations of the Republicans, who represented M. Guizot as alternately the tool of England and the vassal of Russia, and as degrading France by depriving her of the last privilege left to her—that of evincing sympathy with heroism in misfortune. So violent were the declamations of the Liberal press on the subject, that several prosecutions were insti-

Dec. 16. tuted against the leading journals. On 16th December the *National* was seized, and the editor sent to the Chamber of Peers for trial, by whom he was convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of 10,000 francs; and on

Dec. 26. the 26th, M. Lamennais was convicted and sentenced to

a year's imprisonment and a fine of 2000 francs. Terrible inundations in the valleys of the Rhone and the Saône supervened at this time, which did immense damage to Lyons, Maçon, and the principal towns on their banks, besides laying waste sixty square leagues of territory, and utterly destroying a hundred villages. With praiseworthy liberality the Chamber, on their first meeting, voted 6,500,000 francs (£325,000) to relieve the sufferers by these disasters, which did not, unhappily, cover a tenth part of the losses sustained.[1]

Nov. 4.

[1] Regnault, ii. 50, 53; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 394, 395.

53. Publication of letters ascribed to Louis Philippe.

Ere long the public appetite for scandal and abuse of the Government received still more fortunate subjects on which to feast. In the end of 1840, Madame de Feuchères died, whose name had been so intimately connected with the death of the Duke de Bourbon some years before. This event revived all the scandalous reports regarding her accession to that catastrophe which had received such strong confirmation from the favour shown to her by the royal family, after the magnificent succession which opened to them from the deceased. But a more serious subject for conversation was soon afforded. On 24th January the *Gazette de France* published three letters, professing to be from Louis Philippe, when king, to Lord Stuart de Rothesay, the English ambassador, under the exciting title of "La politique de Louis Philippe expliquée par *lui-même*." The purport of these letters was to reveal the intimate connection which subsisted between the French Minister and the English Government; and the object of their publication was to represent him as in effect, and by his own admission, the mere vassal and puppet of Great Britain. How such strictly confidential documents found their way into a public journal, especially one of ultra-Legitimist principles, was not explained. But their contents were too important to the two great parties which were in opposition to the Government, to permit a doubt to be thrown upon their authenticity. They were immediately, and by common consent, hailed

Jan. 24, 1841.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

as genuine alike by the Republicans and the Legitimists; they appeared next day in the columns of the *National*, the *Quotidienne*, and the *Echo Français;* and the effect of their publication was such that the Government felt themselves constrained to adopt some steps to counteract it. The same day a short notice appeared in the *Moniteur*, saying "that several journals had published fragments of letters *falsely and criminally* ascribed to the King. Prosecutions have been ordered for the crime of forgery, and a criminal attempt on the King."[1]*

[1] Gazette de France, Jan. 24, 1841; Moniteur, Jan. 25; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 388; Regnault, ii. 83, 84.

Nothing could be more injudicious than to bring the matter to this issue, especially when the extreme hostility against the Government of the two great parties which

* The most material parts of these letters were as follows:—"En thèse générale, ma résolution la plus sincère et la plus ferme est de maintenir inviolables tous les traités qui ont été conclus depuis quinze ans entre les puissances de l'Europe et la France. Quant à ce qui concerne l'occupation d'Alger, j'ai des motifs plus particuliers, et plus puissants encore, pour remplir fidèlement les engagements que ma famille a pris envers la Grande Bretagne. Ces motifs sont le vif désir que j'éprouve d'être agréable à Sa Majesté Britannique, et ma conviction profonde qu'une alliance intime entre les deux pays est nécessaire, non seulement à leurs intérêts réciproques, mais encore à l'intérêt et à la civilisation de l'Europe. Vous pouvez donc, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, affirmer à votre Gouvernement que le mien se conformera ponctuellement à tous les engagements pris par S. M. Charles X. relativement à l'affaire d'Alger. Mais je vous prie d'appeller l'attention du Cabinet Britannique sur l'état actuel des esprits en France, de lui faire observer que l'évacuation d'Alger serait le signal des plus violentes récriminations contre mon gouvernement, qu'elle pourrait amener des résultats désastreux, et qu'il importe à la paix de l'Europe de ne point dépopulariser un Pouvoir naissant et qui travaille à se constituer."

2*d Letter.*—"Il paraît que vous n'avez pas encore réussi à faire comprendre, ni à Vienne ni à St Pétersbourg que, sans la non-intervention, l'Europe était ébranlée, que l'Autriche eût perdu l'Italie comme on a enlevé la Belgique à la Hollande. A-t-on pu ou dû oublier que, lors du Gouvernement Czartoryski, la Pologne en masse, sous l'influence révolutionnaire eût été débout, et que, sans notre sage et salutaire influence, elle se fût unie à la France pour repousser, pour écraser, qu'on n'en doute pas, la Russie, malgré ses forces colossales; parcequ'il est immortellement vrai que lorsqu'un Peuple, vraiment Peuple, est débout pour la liberté, il n'y a aucun Pouvoir absolu qui suffise pour le dompter. J'avais mieux espéré des éclaircissements que vous avez dû donner sur l'immensité du service que nous avons rendu à la Russie, à l'Autriche, et à la Prusse, service qui ressort du fait, puisque la Pologne a succombé, et non pas sans quelque péril pour nous. N'avez-vous pas les deux lettres de Lafayette, contenant les reproches à notre Ministre d'avoir paralysé par ses conseils et ses promesses les moyens de défense de la Pologne? En faut-il plus pour les Cabinets de Vienne et de St Petersbourg, et peut-on ignorer tout le danger qui existait pour la Russie dans les plans et le système de défense adopté par les

54. Prosecutions against the editors who published the papers.

entered so largely into the composition of every Paris jury was taken into consideration. So it turned out accordingly on the present occasion. The *Gazette de France* was prosecuted by the Advocate-General on the part of the Government, and the defence was conducted, with his wonted ability, by M. Berryer. After a long trial, and an hour's deliberation by the jury, a verdict of "Not Guilty" was returned, to the utmost satisfaction of a crowded court, and the unbounded joy and excitement of the public generally. The sensation produced was the greater, that the Advocate-General had most imprudently, in describing to the jury the purport of the letters alleged to be forgeries, characterised them in these terms:

Polonais sous le Prince Adam, et voudrait-on oublier ce qu'on nous doit, à nous, comme unique et puissant moteur des mesures qui ont paralysé ces résolutions, neutralisé le système, et réalisé les paroles prophétiques de Sébastiani?"

3*d Letter*.—"C'était du temps qu'il fallait gagner, et au lieu d'irriter les esprits, il fallait endormir le civisme en activité pour le préparer au salutaire moment où une ordonnance nous eût fait justice de tout récalcitrant. Du reste, rien ne me fera renoncer à un projet si sagement conçu, à l'exécution duquel, dans l'état des choses où se trouve la France, s'attache en quelque sorte non seulement la durée de la monarchie constitutionnelle, mais la perpétuité de ma dynastie, ce qui sonne mieux et vant mieux pour la France. Qu'on se persuade bien que moi seul je pouvais affronter, diriger, et vaincre l'hydre révolutionnaire. Qu'on nous sache donc un peu de gré. On ne tient aucun compte de nos efforts constants; on ne sait pas à quel peuple nous avons affaire, et que depuis quarante ans on peut regarder Paris comme étant la France. Qu'on s'assure donc que je ne renonce pas à mon projet, ni à celui de maîtriser la presse, notre plus dangereux ennemi. On a gagné une grande partie des écrivains; les autres suivront et le calme succédera aux excitations malignes et journalières de ces plumes guerroyantes. Qu'on pense à ce que Juillet eût pu attirer sur l'Europe en 1830; que l'on voie ce que notre siècle et notre forte volonté ont fait de cette effrayante ébullition populaire; que l'on juge par là de ce que nous ferons; et surtout qu'aucune des Puissances n'oublie que nous seul nous pouvons faire, pour sauver la France et l'Europe, ce que nous avons fait.

"Il y a d'épouvantables conséquences à redouter dans les crises politiques lorsqu'une volonté sage et prévoyante se trouve en inévitable contact avec l'obstination d'un zèle qui peut, dans ce cas, se réputer hardiment de mauvais vouloir. Si au lieu d'en finir brutalement avec les artilleurs civiques, l'on eût suivi mon seul avis, qu'on eût flatté, cajolé ces hommes; qu'on leur eût fait entrevoir que si l'on pensait à construire des forts, c'était pour leur en confier la garde; si on leur eût persuadé qu'en cas d'invasion, Paris ne pourrait devoir son salut qu'à de pareils défenseurs; si, enfin, au lieu d'une décision brusque, on eût pris ces citoyens par la vanité, Arago et les siens n'eussent pas été admis à prouver que les forts, bien loin d'être destinés à repousser une invasion étrangère, deviendraient, dans ce cas, une ressource victorieuse pour maintenir dans le devoir et la soumission la très-turbulente population de Paris, et de ses aimables faubourgs."—REGNAULT, ii. 84, 87; *Ann. Hist.* xxiv. 388.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

—"Were the letters genuine, it would result from them that the King, who had been elected in 1830, to answer the wishes of the nation, has betrayed them on every point; that he has consented to the crushing of Poland in order to advance the interests of Russia; that he was disposed to abandon Algeria in order to promote those of England; that with him the preservation of his dynasty was the sole object, and not the maintenance of the constitutional government; in fine, that the project of fortifying Paris was, in the hands of the King, a project only for oppressing the citizens; that it was directed, not against the stranger, but against his own subjects. Such is the true import of the passages libelled upon as criminal. How could a man be called a king who could engage in such projects? Should he not rather be styled one of those tyrants who move only under the mask of dissimulation, and who establish their empire, not on the sincerity of their language, but on the violation of their engagements?"[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 94, 95.

55. Ambiguity in regard to the authorship of the letters.

It may readily be believed that letters containing such sentiments, and openly ascribed to the reigning sovereign, made an immense sensation, and that every one believed or disbelieved them, according as it suited his private interest or political prepossessions. The accusation of forgery connected with those letters, which was at first preferred against two persons of the names of Lubis and Montour, failed; but as the originals were not produced, and alleged fac-similes only were in the publisher's hands, no direct evidence tending to establish the genuine nature of the documents was got. The celebrated lady known in more than one character, "*La Contemporaine*," was said to have furnished these fac-similes. Thus the matter was left to rest very much on the internal evidence which the letters afforded, and the probabilities of the case; and, viewed in this light, as usual in such instances, there was much to say on both sides. On the one hand, the ideas contained in the letters were

not only the same, but the expressions used were almost identical, word for word, with those ascribed to Louis Philippe by M. Sarrans, in his work published in 1834, on the fall of Charles X., which had never been contradicted, or formed the subject of prosecution.[1] They were also such as corresponded very nearly with expressions which were known to be often used by Louis Philippe to those with whom he was on intimate terms, and which conveyed his fixed ideas. On the other hand, it was very improbable that so prudent and astute a monarch would have hazarded the committing of such sentiments to writing, especially to a foreign ambassador. In this state of uncertainty, every one was at liberty to adopt his own conjectures, and draw his own conclusions; but the great majority of men firmly believed, and still believe, in their authenticity; and the allusions to the subject in the British Parliament render it more than probable that some letter of a similar import, detailing a conversation of Louis Philippe with Lord Stuart de Rothesay, really exists in the Foreign Office. Be this as it may, the publication of these alleged letters answered all the purposes for which it was intended, in adding to the unpopularity of the French monarch.[1]

[1] L. Sarrans, L. Philippe et la Contre-Révolution de 1830, i. 8.

[1] Regnault, ii. 97, 99; Morning Post, April 30, 1841; Sarranas, i. 8, 9.

56. Debate on Reform, and its refusal.

The all-important subject of Parliamentary reform was only glanced at by a side-wind in the Chamber in this session, and on moving for a grant of secret funds, the usual trial of strength of all administrations, M. Duchâtel, in making the motion, said: "Culpable associations are at work in the shade, and menace not only the existence of Government, but of society. Pains are taken to spread doctrines among the working classes subversive of all order; organisation is attempting mysteriously to attack the social system in its essential base —the right of property. Security and repose are awanting to the Government; there is no fixed *to-morrow* for any one in the whole of France; the present is continually tottering, the future is an enigma.

CHAP. XLIV. 1841.

Complaints are made of the dregs of society striving to subvert its foundations: that audacity is the work of the Chambers; it is the consequence of the instability of the ministerial majority. Whence comes this instability?—whence is it that, when the great principles are decided, every one is impassioned for small distinctions as formerly they were for fundamental points?"—"Immobility," exclaimed M. de Courcelles in reply,—"is that your remedy for existing evils? You tell us that the Government cannot acquire external force, or internal consideration, by reason of its instability; that no one can prophesy of to-morrow in France—that the present is tottering, and the future presents an enigma. In such circumstances, you tell us, there is nothing to be done but to execute the laws with rigour, and to oppose a firm resistance to all efforts at constitutional change. You are all agreed on the necessity of this resistance, and yet you yourselves tell us it is against a disunited and vacillating country you are obliged to combine."—"The majority in the Chamber," said M. Guizot in reply, "is composed of a body firmly united to maintain external peace and internal tranquillity; it finds itself in presence of a great danger; and is it surprising that, when its objects can only be attained by a firm adherence to its fundamental principles, it should resist all attempts to shake the constitution or introduce disunion into its ranks? This is not the time to hazard the existence of society by stirring unnecessarily fundamental questions."—"Talk not of this not being the proper time," rejoined M. Odillon Barrot; "it is always a proper time to reconsider legal government and constitutional rights. Could any opportunity be so really desirable as that of honouring your administration by a return to the scrupulous and respectful observance of the constitution? But your policy is to put off one by pleading that the times are inopportune for change, to get quit of another by sacrificing your principles.[1] That is not the conduct of a frank or cour-

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 19-22, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 76, 112; Regnault, ii. 77, 93.

ageous Government." The motion was agreed to without the Opposition amendment by a majority of 235 to 137.

57. Law on literary property defeated.

The question of literary property underwent a very long discussion in this session; and M. de Lamartine, the reporter of the commission to which it was referred, in an elaborate and eloquent report, proposed to limit the exclusive right of publication to fifty years. This long period met with a very fierce resistance, in which several literary men took the lead; and M. Villemain, in hopes of conciliating the Chamber, proposed to restrict it to thirty years after the death of the author, being an extension of ten years from the term of twenty, which had been adopted in the preceding years by the Chamber of Peers. This compromise was at first adopted by the Chamber; but, after a long discussion of eight days, they reversed this decision, and rejected the law altogether, leaving the right of literary property to rest on its present foundation.[1] *

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiv. 175, 195; Regnault, ii. 116, 121.

* "The produce of intellectual and manual labour may differ," said M. de Lamartine, in the Report of the Commission; "but the title to its exclusive enjoyment is the same. The time has now arrived when this title should be recognised by law. By a generosity worthy of its nature, Thought, which creates everything, forgets itself; it asks only of men to be permitted to serve and enchant them; it demands only from Glory the fortune of a name destined to immortality, leaving in poverty or destitution the family of the philosopher or poet, whose works form the intellectual riches of a nation. But the press has made of these intellectual riches a material wealth, which is capable of being seized, consecrated, and regulated by law. That press, which renders Thought palpable as the character which engraves it, and commercial as the copy which forms the subject of sale, must sooner or later form the subject of a legislation which is to recognise its legality, and distribute equitably its fruits. The feeling of justice which prompts this on the part of the legislator takes nothing from the dignity of the writer, or the intellectual character of his labours. It noway lowers the book in its inestimable and inappreciable character of a service spontaneously and gratuitously rendered to the human race. It leaves its recompense to time and the memory of men. It does not touch Thought, which can never fall under the provisions of an infirm pecuniary law; it only relates to the book which has become the object of an impression —become an article of commerce. The idea comes from God, and returns to God, after leaving a trace of light on the forehead of him to whom it has been communicated, and on the name which his son bears; the book becomes the object of commercial circulation, and becomes a property capable of producing revenue, and forming capital. . . . . One man expends a portion of his strength—a few easy years of his life — with the assistance of capital transmitted to him by his fathers, in fertilising his fields, or in exercising a lucra-

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

58. First step in France in the cause of Free Trade.

The session of 1841 was distinguished by the first attempt to introduce into France those principles of Free Trade which, at the same time, were taking such strong root in England. Early in February, Government introduced a measure which, under the modest title of "Loi des Douanes," in effect tended to introduce a lower system of import duties, and in some degree to lessen the protection to native industry. In this instance, however, the views of Government were in advance of the age, or rather, they belonged to a stage in civilisation at which France had not yet arrived. The commission, accordingly, to which the project of Government was referred, reported *against* it. When this report came to be discussed in the Chamber, a perfect chaos of opinions was advanced, singularly descriptive of the various interests at work, and of the sturdy resistance which the principles of Free Trade, when seriously advanced, would meet with from the representatives of the infant native industry of France. Every place of any manufacturing note made its representative vote for the protection of its peculiar branch of industry, though it was quite willing to yield up its neighbour to the spoiler. Nantes fought the battle of oil in opposition to St Etienne; Bordeaux contended

tive industry. He accumulates riches on riches, produce on produce; he enjoys all the luxuries of life, and you secure to him their possession during all the days of his life, and after him, to the heirs of his blood, or the beneficiaries of his will. Another expends his whole life, consumes his moral strength, enervates his physical frame in the oblivion of himself and his family, to enrich the world after his death, either with a *chef-d'œuvre* of the human mind, or with one of those ideas which change the face of the world. He sinks under his efforts; he dies: but his work is done; his *chef-d'œuvre* is produced; his idea is evolved; the intellectual world seize hold of it; industry, commerce, make it a subject of gain. It becomes, by degrees, often after the author's death, a source of wealth; it casts millions into circulation and the rewards of industry; it is worked out for the benefit of others as a natural produce of the soil. All the world has right to it except the widow and children of that man who created it, who may be begging their bread beside the colossal fortunes which have owed their existence to the unrequited toil of their father. Such a state of things can never bear the light of conscience where God has inscribed the ineffaceable code of equity. Entire Europe at this moment is inspired with these ideas; it belongs to France to take the lead in their development. Her great place in the world has been wrought out for her by the hand of her

for protection to wine; Rouen for cotton goods; the north struggled for the interests of stuffs; the west for metals. In the midst of such a confused mêlee, when the opposition was actuated entirely by separate interests, there was no possibility of united action; and the Ministry, resting on general principles, obtained an easy victory over so many and such divided opponents. But the struggle was long and violent; every separate branch of the tariff underwent a minute discussion; and it was evident, from the vehemence of so many detached oppositions, that if they once came to act in concert, they would obtain the undisputed command of the legislature.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 4-18, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 226, 290; Regnault, ii. 122, 124.

59. M. Humann's picture of the disastrous state of the finances.

The disastrous state of the finances led to a most alarming representation of M. Humann, the finance minister, and to a fiscal regulation which excited most serious opposition in France, and went far to shake the throne with a class which had hitherto been its firm supporters. The finance minister thus expressed himself: "Our situation has become such that it cannot long endure. It is in vain that we strive to provide for former deficits, when we are condemned every year to see new deficits arise. Now, deficit is another word for discredit, impotence, anarchy.

artists, the pen of her writers, the sword of her soldiers. Can she leave in a state of negligence and spoliation those great powers which Thought and Genius have won over the human mind? Ingratitude often turns to the advantage of glory, for it renders it more touching; but it never, in the long run, enriches nations. What do we owe to those five or six men whose heritage we have so long been bespoiling? Five or six immortal names are all that is left to us of nationality in the past. Poets, philosophers, orators, historians, artists, rest alone in the memory: the brilliant remains of a nation's history! . . . . The serious and legal constitution of the right of individual artistic and literary property is a change eminently in harmony with the democratic principles which are specially characteristic of our times. That species of property carries with it all that is awanting to democracy. It confers eclat without privilege, respect without constraint; grandeur to some, without abasement to others. Nobility has been suppressed, but not glory; that shining gift of Nature is like all the other gifts of God—accessible to all classes. Genius, which is born everywhere, is the great leveller of the world; but it is so by elevating the general level of the people. Literary property is, in an especial manner, the embodiment of the spirit of democracy; glory is the nobility of equality."—*Rapport par* M. DE LAMARTINE; *Ann. Hist.* xxiv. 175, 176, 181, 182; *Moniteur*, Feb. 12, 1841.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

Is it possible to escape from such a result at no distant period, when we do nothing but accumulate loans upon loans, the sad expedient of prodigality reduced to its last shifts? Credit itself has its requirements; it refuses its aid to those who abuse it. And observe, that when it has become necessary to make loans for *annual* expenses for permanent charges, they are worse than a disorder; they amount to an injustice committed by one generation upon another. Loans, in truth, are nothing but deferred taxes; the interest they bear becomes an immediate addition to the capital, which must one day or other be provided for. Thus the abuse of credit saddens the present, and prepares a still more melancholy future. Is it, then, possible, by the single resources of economy, to establish a balance between the income and expenditure? Is it possible that we are to be presented with a budget for 1843 containing a deficit of 116,000,000 francs? If so, the necessity for economy was never more imperious than at this time; but to render it effective, it must be judicious and real; I have no idea that by anything short of that a balance can be established between income and expenditure. A country which has been over-excited is not calmed in a day, and can never enter suddenly on the path of economical reform; the *errors of days of excitement hang for long a heavy load on the public finances.* On considering the budget for 1843, and detaching from it all the expenses which can be considered as transitory, the deficit cannot be less than 60,000,000 francs."[1]

[1] Moniteur, May 26, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 374.

60. Expedient of a new valuation.

It was more easy, however, to depict the alarming state of the finances, than to point out a mode in which the existing dangers were to be obviated. For the existing taxes could not be increased without the greatest danger of exciting discontent, if not disturbances; and to lay on new ones would be still more hazardous. In this dilemma, it occurred to M. Humann, as the only possible way of getting out of the difficulty, to make a

new valuation of taxable property of every description, in hopes that, by raising it, an increased revenue might be obtained without incurring the odium of laying on new taxes. This accordingly was the expedient resorted to; but it proved most unfortunate, and led to a dispute between the Government and the municipal authorities which threatened more grave consequences than the imposition of any new taxes, how oppressive soever, could have done. To understand how this came about, it must be premised that, by the existing practice of France, the valuation of properties was made in four successive stages, and by different authorities in each: 1st, A division among the departments, made by the Chambers or those appointed by them; 2d, A division among the arrondissements, made by their councils-general; 3d, A division among the communes, made by the councils of the arrondissements; and, 4th, A division among the citizens, made by the municipalities. The first division was, by the law of 11th July 1838, to be made every ten years; the three others every year. But how was the first to be made? It could only be done by the officers of the taxes, who alone possessed the requisite materials to form such a general distribution. The three last stood in a different situation. They were all intrusted to the different grades of the local authorities, beginning with the councils of arrondissements, and descending through that of the commune to the municipality. Here each was intrusted with an important duty in its own sphere, and possessed the materials to discharge it. But to suppose that the local authorities could partition the burdens among the departments, was as ridiculous as it would be to charge a parish vestry, or county quarter sessions, with the laying on of the property, assessed, and land taxes, over the whole kingdom.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 130, 135; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 377, 378.

Although, however, all this was abundantly clear to men of business, and all acquainted with the working of the machinery by which the direct taxes were raised

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

61. Extreme discontent produced by the new "Recensement."

in the country, yet unfortunately it was not equally palpable to the persons, amounting to many millions, who in the last resort were *to pay* them. On the contrary, being accustomed to be brought in contact only with the subordinate authorities appointed by the municipalities, or the councils of the arrondissement, or the departments, they not unnaturally came to imagine that they were intrusted with the entire making up of the valuation. When, therefore, they saw the officers of the Exchequer setting about the preliminary surveys which were to form the basis of the whole, and still more, when they learned that the new surveys *generally ended in an increase of the valuation*, the belief became all but universal that a serious infringement of their constitutional rights was in contemplation, and that the officers of Exchequer were illegally employed on the preliminary surveys, because it was thought they would prove more docile than those nominated by the local authorities. This mistake was carefully propagated by the Radical press, which universally maintained that the agents of the central power had no right to make the obnoxious surveys which were expressly reserved by law for those appointed by the municipalities. The consequence was, that wherever it was attempted to carry the orders of the Treasury into execution, they were declared illegal by the municipalities, and an open resistance to them was recommended. This was, in particular, the case at Strasbourg, Grenoble, Aix, Albi, Auxerre, Bayonne, Caen, Clermont, Bordeaux, Lille, Cahors, Châtelherault, Montpellier, Mont de Marsan, Provins, Troyes, and a multitude of other towns and districts. One half of France refused to admit the Government surveyors into their houses, and was in a state of passive insurrection against the Government.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 131, 139; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 401, 407.

At length matters came to a crisis at Toulouse. The prefect of that city, M. Floret, foreseeing that the survey of the Government officers could not be carried into execution without a sanguinary struggle, as the munici-

Serious troubles at Toulouse. July 3.

pality had refused to assist them in their labours, and it was known that, in doing so, they were supported by the whole body of the National Guard, demanded instructions from the Government how to act, and, in the mean time, suspended the execution of the Treasury orders. Twelve days elapsed without any answer being received, and when it did come, it was a simple dismissal of M. Floret, and appointment of a new prefect, M. Mahul, in his room. The whole magisterial and municipal authorities warmly sympathised with the dismissed prefect, and indeed the entire population. Both parties commenced operations: the municipality voted a sum of money to carry on the valuation by their own officers; the prefect interdicted them, and went on with the survey by the Treasury officers. In this excited state the transition was easy to acts of violence. Menacing crowds assembled round the hotel of the prefect; the horse-artillery sallied out to disperse them; chains were drawn across the principal streets to arrest the charges; blood flowed on all sides, and barricades were thrown up in several parts of the town. So far from attempting to check these disorders, the National Guard took part in them with the insurgents. To such a height did the insurrection proceed, that after several days' fighting, and the erection of above twenty barricados in the narrowest parts of the town, the insurgents were everywhere victorious; the National Guard were all ranged on their side; the artillerymen and Chasseurs of Vincennes, the most obnoxious part of the military, were shut up in their barracks; both M. Mahul the prefect, and M. Plangolm the procureur-general, were constrained ignominiously to desert their posts and leave the city, and General Saint-Michel, the general of division in the district, was so intimidated that he did not venture to direct the forces under his command against the insurgent city.[1]

[1] Moniteur, July 17, 1841; Regnault, ii. 143, 147; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 401, 404.

Matters had now proceeded so far, that Ministers could

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

63. Suppression of the disturbances.

not recede without sharing in the disgrace of the civil and military officers, who had suffered themselves to be so ignominiously defeated. The measures of Government, in consequence, were vigorous and decided: the whole authorities, civil and military, at Toulouse, were changed; M. Maurice Duval was sent down as extraordinary commissioner, with unlimited powers; General Saint-Michel was replaced by General Rulhières, an officer of capacity and resolution, and such a body of troops concentrated on the city as rendered farther resistance a

July 13. matter of impossibility. By royal proclamation, the National Guard of Toulouse was dissolved; General Rulhières made his entry into the city at the head of an imposing force; artillery, with lighted matches beside the guns, were planted in the principal square; and, with the dagger at their throats, the whole National Guard were disarmed. Under protection of this military force, the new valuation was resumed and completed by the officers

Aug. 20. Sept. 9. of the Treasury. Similar scenes occurred at Lille, Clermont, and many other places, where resistance was in like manner attempted, barricades erected, and blood shed. At length the steadiness of the military prevailed over the desultory and unconnected efforts of the citizens; the tumults were appeased, and the Government valuation completed. But these events left a very painful impression on men's minds, and diffused a general feeling of distrust of the future, which had not been felt since the accession of the present dynasty; for disaffection had now reached a class which had hitherto been most exempt from it, and it had become necessary to disarm the National Guard, which had always shown itself the firmest support of the throne.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 147, 150; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 404, 405; Moniteur, July 13, 1841.

The summer of this year witnessed the death of one of the brightest ornaments of French literature, M. Garnier Pagès. The rude combats of the Chamber, and excessive anxiety consequent on them, proved too much for a constitution naturally frail, and by no means adequate

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

to the support of his ardent and intrepid spirit. He died on the 23d June in the full lustre of his talents and fame; ten thousand persons attended his funeral, and he carried with him to the grave the ardent affections of the Liberals, the respect of all parties in France. He was succeeded in the representation of Mons, for which he had sat, by a man by no means of the same genius, but more suited to the taste of the extreme Liberal section, and better adapted for the stormy scenes which were approaching. M. LEDRU-ROLLIN was a man of robust health, vigorous intellect, considerable powers of popular eloquence, unflinching energy, and unscrupulous ambition. Drowned in debt, he entered public life in the hope of gaining something which would enable him to discharge it; but though he had unbounded ambition, he had not the firmness of character, or mental resources, to qualify him to play a great part on the stage of public life. He was passionately fond of theatrical display, and desired rather to repeat the dramatic scenes of the first Revolution than advance its principles or secure its objects. His figure and countenance corresponded to this character: a robust and corpulent figure, thick lips, large and heavy eyes, and a harsh, disagreeable voice, he resembled rather a chief of brigands than the leader of a great political party in the State. His character was well known in the clubs, where his first eminence had been attained; in them he was regarded as a man of words rather than deeds, and their members gave him and M. Flocon the nickname of "paper-manufacturers and merchants." [1]

64. Death of M. Garnier Pagès, and election of M. Ledru-Rollin. June 23.

[1] De la Hodde, Hist. des Sociétés Secrètes, c. xiv.; Chenu, Hist. des Conspirateurs, c. viii.; Cassagnac, Hist. de la Chute de Louis Philippe, i. 118, 119.

Though deficient, however, in the qualities required to form a revolutionary leader in troubled times, Ledru-Rollin possessed the ready elocution and courage *in words* which in the outset of convulsions are generally found to be all-powerful with the multitude. In an address delivered to the electors the evening before his election, he expressed himself in no measured terms on

65. Prosecution and acquittal of Ledru-Rollin.

CHAP. XLIV.

1841.

the leading questions of the day, and rudely threw the gauntlet down to the depositaries of power. It made, accordingly, an immense impression; the more so that so undisguised an expression of republican sentiments had for long been unheard, at least from those destined for the legislature. It was accordingly made the subject of a prosecution, which was directed also against M. Haureau, the chief editor of the *Courrier de la Sarthe*, in which it had first appeared. This state trial was the making of Ledru-Rollin's fortune. The accused were both in the first instance convicted; but a formal error caused the conviction of M. Ledru-Rollin to be set aside in the Court of Cassation, and by the new jury, to whom he was sent at the assizes at Mayenne, he was acquitted. The editor, M. Haureau, however, was not equally fortunate; the formal objection did not apply to him, and thus the final result was that the author of the libel escaped without punishment, while the mere publisher was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and a fine of 3000 francs. Another libel of a still more audacious description, published by the *National*, was soon after made the subject of three successive prosecutions, in every one of which the accused was acquitted.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 158, 160; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 404, 409.

66. Attempted assassination of the Dukes of Orléans and Nemours. Sept. 13.

Another of those atrocious attempts at assassination of some members of the royal family, which had so often disgraced France during the reign of Louis Philippe, occurred at this period. On the 13th September the Duke de Aumale made his public entrance into Paris at the head of the 13th regiment of infantry, with which he had made a successful campaign in Algeria. The Duke de Orléans and the Duke de Nemours went to meet him; and the cortège, in great pomp, was returning into Paris, accompanied by the Governor of Paris and a brilliant staff, when, at the corner of the Rue Traversière, an explosion was suddenly heard, and a ball struck the horse of General Schneider, who was riding immediately on the left of the Duke de Nemours. The assassin was

seized by a workman, and soon after by the police officers, and secured after a violent struggle, during which he repeatedly called out in a loud voice, "*A moi, les amis.*" He turned out to be a lawyer, named François Quenisset, who had formerly been in the army, and having been sentenced to three years of imprisonment and hard labour for mutiny, had succeeded in making his escape from the galleys in 1837. It was clearly proved, in the proceedings which ensued, that the assassin belonged to one of the secret societies, by whom a vague plan of a general insurrection against the Government had been formed, which was to be commenced by cutting off the heir to the throne. After a long trial the three chiefs of the conspiracy, Quenisset, Bourier, and Colombus, were found guilty, and sentenced to death; and a number of others to various degrees of transportation and imprisonment.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Sept. 14, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 406, 410; Regnault, ii. 163, 166.

67. Moral complicity: its dangerous tendency.

So far all was right, and the most vehement Republican, if not dead to every sense of justice, or every generous feeling, could not but admit that the pains awarded was not disproportioned to the offence. But in the eagerness of prosecution, and under the influence of feelings highly exasperated by these repeated attempts at assassination of the royal family, the crown lawyers went a step further, and mooted a question, in itself of very doubtful legality or justice, and which only widened and rendered irreparable the breach between the press and the Government. Profoundly convinced of what was obviously the fact, that it was the incessant declamation and provocation of the press which produced these constantly recurring attempts at assassination, they took up the idea that the authors of such articles might be *included in the charge* for the last criminal act, which their words tended to recommend. Their idea was that they were in a manner "accessaries before the fact," although noways cognisant of what was actually intended, or accessory to the preparations for carrying

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

it into execution. They called this "complicité morale;" and however repugnant such a doctrine may be to natural justice or legal principle, it met with a ready reception from the Chamber of Peers; and M. Dupoty, editor of the *Journal du Peuple*, in which a violent article had been inserted five days before the attempt of the 13th September, was convicted "d'une provocation suivie d'effet," and sentenced to five years imprisonment. There can be no doubt that this was an arbitrary and illegal stretch: the authors of such inflammatory articles are guilty of an offence, and liable to punishment; but without something more to connect them with the perpetration of, or preparation for, the last act, they are not accessaries before the fact; such a doctrine is worse than the "constructive treason" so firmly repudiated by the best English lawyers. Such was the indignation of the Parisian editors at this decision, that the majority of them immediately adopted a resolution from that day forward to report none of the proceedings of the Chamber of Peers.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 19, 1841; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 410; Regnault, 164, 169.

68. Debate on Electoral Reform in the Council of State. Jan. 17, 1842.

At length the great question of Electoral Reform assumed such proportions that it could no longer be postponed. A solemn debate on the subject was held in the Council of State, in presence of the Duke of Orléans and the principal officers of state. The chief objection to any change originated with the King himself. He persisted in maintaining that "the cry for reform is a malady of the age, but it will pass away: we must know, however, how to treat it. The Kings of the Continent preserve themselves from it by terror; for my own part I prefer the homœopathic method, and I find it succeeds." He frequently said, "Am not I too a grandson of Louis XIV?" M. Guizot thought with him that the cry for reform was "a fictitious one, got up for party purposes; that it had no foundation in the real interests or durable wishes of the country; and that reform might be withheld without endangering the public tranquillity." Several of

the Ministry, however, who had been brought more in contact with the middle classes, entertained different views, and strongly advocated the expedience of dividing the Liberals by making some considerable concession to the most reasonable of their number. The opinion of the Duke of Orléans in this divided state of opinion was anxiously looked for; and as his connections had hitherto lain chiefly among the Liberal party, and he had on many occasions expressed in public ultra-Liberal sentiments, it was expected he would declare for the same side. To the surprise of every one, however, he did the very reverse. He ranged himself with the King, and this determined the council, by whom it was resolved to resist all concession to reform. So much was this opinion of the Duke of Orléans at variance with his known preconceived sentiments and political connections, that it was generally surmised that the change was instigated by M. Thiers, with whom he was certainly in close communication, and who was desirous of signalising his own future administration by a liberal measure of electoral reform.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 231, 236.

69. Movement in favour of reform in the Chamber.

Notwithstanding this decision of the Council of State, which rendered hopeless any movement in favour of Reform in the Chambers, it was brought forward, though in a very modified form, by two members of the Chamber of Deputies, who were actuated by anything rather than a spirit of hostility to the Government. A motion was introduced to the effect that members of the Chamber of Deputies, who were not office-bearers at their election, should be disqualified from receiving appointments during the period when they sat in the Chamber, or within a year after its expiry. The latter moved, that the list of electors should be extended to all those who stood on the rolls of departments to act as jurymen. These were very moderate proposals, and obviously of a beneficial character; for the first tended to limit the overwhelming influence of Ministers in the Chamber, while the latter introduced a new element into the electoral body,[2] composed of persons whose capacity to

[2] Moniteur, Feb. 11, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxv. 51, 53.

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

discharge its duties could hardly be doubted, since they were already invested with the right to judge in cases involving the lives and liberties of their fellow-citizens. The debate which followed was not very long, but it was eminently descriptive of the present temper of men's minds, and prophetic of the future of France.

70. Argument in favour of Parliamentary Reform.

On the one hand, it was argued by M. Guizot: "We hear complaints on all sides of the agitation which exists in all classes of society; of the passion for places and honours which has seized all ranks of citizens, even the humblest; of the obloquy which surrounds functionaries, even the most respectable and eminent. Gentlemen, there is but one way to remedy these evils. Establish salutary rules; cause eligibility to office to be the result of years of preparation and study; make it the reward of a life of honour and usefulness, and you will soon surround office with the respectability which should belong to it. Doubtless you will not remedy the evil completely, for it springs from the principles of human nature; but you will alleviate it in a certain degree, and at any rate you will clear yourself of responsibility, by showing that you have done what you can to limit it. But to do this with effect you must begin with yourselves; your interests, your dignity, the maintenance of your power, alike demand it.

71. Continued.

"It is in the fundamental principle of the French government—democracy—in its sovereignty, in the organs of general opinion, that you can alone find an antidote to this great and growing evil. The only effect of the proposed law would be to lower the character of the legislature, to impoverish the administration, to enervate the public service, to retain only in its lowest grades those whom talent or merit have pointed out as qualified to enter it. Are you prepared to take away from the electors all self-esteem, all respectability in the eyes of Europe, by openly proclaiming that they are governed in their choice only by selfish or corrupt considerations? Are you content to hold out France, within and without, as a country

overrun with a moral gangrene and political corruption, where the Ministers are unworthily swayed by the deputies, the deputies by the electors, the electors by their vile personal ambition and their lowest local interests; and where, in order to obtain the shadow even of honest representation, you must put a precautionary law on the side of each conscience, and a law of distrust beside every vote?

72. Continued.

"The real danger of the country, its prevailing vice, is not corruption, *it is the want of great public men*, of those men who are the living and immortal expression of great ideas, of great passions, of great courage. Placed midway between the ardent youth which is striving to bring back the Republic, and the great proprietors who regret the ancient order of things, where can Government recruit its ranks if not in the property of the middle classes, in the ability of the liberal professions, in the intelligence, activity, and patriotism of the great and laborious central mass of the country? Is it at such a moment that you propose to cripple its resources, to lessen its respectability, to abridge its usefulness, by cutting off from its political support all that intermediate class which participates in the administrative functions? You have not the elements of adequate support to Government in France if you deprive it in the Chambers of the most powerful of these classes. Recollect the deplorable consequences which ensued from the self-denying ordinance, passed by the Constituent Assembly. Figure to yourselves the great voices thereby doomed to impotent silence, — Barnave without a voice, and unable to ascend the Tribune at the very moment when an insane faction was precipitating France into the abyss.

73. Continued.

"The demand for an increase in the number of electors is equally unfounded. By the extension of the suffrage which resulted from the law of 1831, which reduced the qualification from the payment of 300 to that of 200 francs direct taxes, the number of electors swelled at once

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

from 99,000 to 168,000, and since then it has gradually advanced to 224,000. In these circumstances, what reasonable ground is there for a further extension of the suffrage? Are you desirous to swamp the education, intelligence, and property which now form the foundation of the electoral body, by the immense mass of uneducated persons, destitute of property or intelligence, which any considerable extension of the suffrage would admit into its ranks? The present moment is eminently inopportune for the mooting of any such question. The effervescence produced by the treaty of 15th July has not yet subsided; and if the idea once get afloat that the Chamber is prepared to entertain a project of electoral reform, it will immediately be concluded that the career of innovation is again opened, and the Chamber will turn into a National Assembly.

74. Continued.

"That such a change would be perilous must be evident to all, but is it not evident that it is as uncalled for as it is hazardous? The noise made on the subject is a merely superficial and artificial cry got up by the journals and the committees, but which does not spring from the real wishes of the country, its interests, its wants, its necessities. No genuine motive exists for the movement—nothing which should influence the sensible portion of the nation. Unity is the great characteristic of the French monarchy—not merely a geographical unity, but a moral internal principle of homogeneity. The envy produced by rank, the rivalry of classes, has disappeared. There are no longer any interests profoundly at variance in society. There is no line of demarcation between the electors paying 300 francs of taxes and those paying 200 or 50. Their interests are at bottom the same; they live under the same laws, they are subject to the same conditions of civil society. Unlike what has ever before happened in the world, the similitude of interests is allied to the diversity of professions and the inequality of conditions. From this it follows that the distribution of political rights is not, and could not be,

the object of perpetual strife, as is the case in societies differently constituted. On this account the passion for political rights can never be very strongly felt in our society, because, how powerful soever may be the springs of vanity in the human breast, how strong soever the desire for the enjoyment of political power, when its exercise is not required for the defence of daily interests, the security of property, the defence of life or of liberty, when its possession, in short, is not necessary to the social state, it will fail in awakening the same ardour in the masses.

75. Concluded.

"The cry for Reform has been raised by the enemies of the Government, by those who desire the overthrow of the social order; but neither among the Republicans nor the Carlists does it embrace any honourable men, although at the first signal of distress all the factions will precipitate themselves on the Government, to profit by its difficulties. It is your first duty to close every access to their approach, to take from them all pretexts, and to defend the inexperienced public against the illusions which they never cease to propagate. We have a task to perform, more difficult than has ever yet been imposed on any people. We have these things to found: a new society composed of the great democracy, heretofore unknown in the history of the world; new institutions, the representative system, heretofore a stranger to our country; in fine, a new dynasty. Never was such a duty imposed on any people. Nevertheless we approach our object. The new society is preponderating, victorious; no one contests it; it has demonstrated its strength, it has taken possession of the social land, it has conquered at once the institutions and the dynasty which befit it. The great conquests are all made; all the great interests are satisfied; our first, I may even say our sole duty, is to take possession of the ground we have gained; to secure its complete and lasting enjoyment. But to do this, which is the real enterprise and duty of our times, we

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

require two things: in the first place, stability; and in the second, a prudent administration in the daily affairs of the State. These are the true requirements, the real wants of France. But instead of this, what are the Liberals doing? They are doing just the reverse of what good policy and the real national interests require. They are striving to undermine our laws, our institutions; to sow distrust where there should only be confidence; to shake the stability of the electoral body, of the Chamber, of the Government. And why have they adventured on so perilous a course? Is it to meet the wants of a great majority of the country, the imperious demand of a predominant section of the community? No: it is to satisfy a few ambitions, to gratify a craving felt only by a limited number. And it is for such a miserable factitious object, which springs from individual selfishness, not general interest, that you are called on to endanger our laws, our institutions, our liberties."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxv. 51, 71; Moniteur, Feb. 7-12, 1842.

76. Lamartine's reply.

M. Lamartine thundered in strains of prophetic eloquence in reply: "In all countries, and in all ages, there are men, honourable, well-intentioned, but blind in political passion, intrenched in a numerical majority, who shut their eyes to all new ideas, however good, mature, prepared. In vain have you served these men in their legitimate interests; in vain have you joined them in the days of their dangers and difficulties; in vain have you supported them in those struggles which Government must always maintain with the factious; in vain have you stood forward, to defend or perish with them, to preserve the peace of the world, or the constitutional authority with which you yourselves have invested them, and to which they fly for refuge in the tempest. All is forgotten! You may enjoy their esteem; but from the moment when you propose a measure of innovation, the most prudent, the most wise, the most advantageous to the conservative spirit of the Government, from that moment you become their enemy. I am not indulging

in personalities in saying this; I am recounting the history of all the great epochs in our history, those of 1789, of 1815, of this time. It is in vain, with such men, that powers are altered, decomposed; that the moral forces of a country are corrupted, demoralised, under their very eyes. They foresee nothing, they will provide for nothing. Their only resource is to shroud themselves in the immobility of despotism; they would even make use of its burning fetters rather than admit of the smallest agitation. If you listen to such men, you would arrive at the conclusion that political wisdom consists only in one thing,—to rest in any situation on which hazard or revolution has cast them, and to remain there immovable, inert, implacable — yes! implacable, even against any amelioration. And if that were really all that was requisite for statesmanship, a man of superior mind would not be required for the discharge of its duties; the most limited capacity would suffice for it.

"You have long inscribed on your banners 'Resistance, —Eternal Resistance.' I understand this policy during the period which immediately followed the Revolution of July, and down to the close of 1834. During all that period, resistance was the first duty of the Chamber, and you have worthily, gloriously discharged it. But after 1834 the danger was over, the necessity for resistance no longer existed; and then arose a variety of questions, on which the ideas of our leading statesmen were not abreast of the spirit of the age. I grieve to say there exists in France, not a feeling of national degradation —the nation will never be degraded; but of important interests strangled, of impassioned desires thwarted. Beware of increasing this painful feeling in that class which you call intelligent, political, and which is certainly more *impressionable* than the territorial body in whom, at present, power is chiefly vested.[1] For the best interests of this great country, you should not lightly reject a proposal which goes to recruit the electoral body with active,

77. Concluded.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxv. 71, 73; Moniteur, Feb. 18, 1842.

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

living, patriotic forces, which will communicate a new life to its decaying members, and will give it additional strength to resist the underhand but undying coalition of the European powers against our liberties and independence."*

78. Reflections on this debate, and its result.

Memorable in many respects, both from the talent displayed on either side, and the exposition it affords of the views of the two great parties which divided the State on the vital question which soon after overthrew the monarchy, this debate is still more remarkable from the *entire ignorance* of the disposition and social necessities of the country to which it referred which was evinced by the orators on both sides. M. de Lamartine, with the warm and sanguine ideas of a poet, had no doubt that the opinion of the electors, if their ranks were enlarged, and placemen excluded, would bring forward to the Chamber men of superior capacity and power; forgetting that *jealousy of independence of character, or originality of thought,* is the great characteristic of all large bodies of men, and never fails, after a short struggle, to banish self-acting genius and intrepid ability from the legislature; a jealousy to which he himself, after the revolution of 1848, so soon became a victim. And M. Guizot was clear that the great questions which divided society were now settled, that all interests were identical now that feudality was abolished, and that the 200-franc votes shielded the 100, the 50, and every other class of society; forgetting that the terrible question of *capital* versus *labour* still remained to distract the world; that the landed aristocracy had been abolished only to give place to the monied, a still more powerful and dangerous body; and that if the working classes were no longer openly bespoiled by the armed retainers of a feudal lord, they were often still more effectually stripped of the fruits of their toil by the unseen

* The divisions on these two proposals were as follows: That for the exclusion of placemen was rejected by the narrow majority of 198 to 190; that for the extension of the suffrage, by 234 to 193.—*Ann. Hist.*, xxv. 73.

and unobserved operation of monetary laws, which enhance the value of money and lessen the rewards of labour.

Faithful to his system of consulting the material interests of the country, while he resisted any extension of its political power, M. Guizot brought forward in this session a magnificent project for a general system of railways, which was to cover France, and would, it was hoped, secure for its inhabitants the advantages which the more advanced system carried out on the other side of the Channel had already given to those of Great Britain. The plan which was adopted by the Chamber was, that Government should be at the whole expense of purchasing and levelling the ground, constructing the viaducts, bridges, and sleepers; while the companies should buy and lay the rails, and bear the whole charges of working the lines and keeping them in repair. It was proposed to make the railway system very complete in France; so much so, indeed, that the scheme has not yet been fully carried into execution. It was proposed to establish lines,—1st, From Paris to the Belgian frontier; 2d, From Paris to the shores of the Channel, on the road to London; 3d, From Paris to the German frontier, by Nancy and Strasbourg; 4th, From Paris to Marseilles, by Lyons; 5th, From Paris to Bayonne, by Orléans, Tours, and Bordeaux; 6th, To Nantes, by Tours; 7th, From Paris to Bourges; 8th, From the Mediterranean to the Rhine, by Lyons, Dijon, and Mülhausen; 9th, From Bordeaux to Marseilles, by Toulouse. It is remarkable, and highly characteristic of the social state of France, and its industrial inferiority to England, how large a proportion of these lines terminate in Paris, and how few led from one part of the country to the other. Such as it was, however, the project was grandly conceived; and being under the entire direction and control of Government, it was free from the ruinous competition of rival lines, which has proved fatal to so many undertakings of a similar kind in Great Britain.[1]

79. Extension of the railway system in France.

[1] Moniteur, April 27-30, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxv. 122, 123; Regnault, ii. 238, 241.

CHAP. XLIV.

1842.

The charges it entailed upon the Government, however, were extremely heavy, and largely contributed to swell the floating debt which had now come to hang as so heavy a load on the French finances. The deficit of this year amounted to 63,289,000 francs (£2,520,000), of which no less than 29,500,000 (£1,180,000) was for railway advances.*

80. Close of the session, and new elections. June 13.

This was the last act of the session, which closed on the 11th June, and two days after appeared an ordonnance dissolving the Chamber, and directing the electoral colleges to meet on the 12th July. The elections were conducted with sufficient keenness to give serious alarm to the Ministry; but, on the whole, the Conservative majority was decided, though not so much so as to remove the danger of being thrown into a minority, in the event of any considerable defection of their adherents in the Centre. The increased growth of Republicanism in the great towns was very apparent. Paris returned two decided leaders of that party, M. Carnot and M. Marie. Dupont de l'Eure was elected by three colleges; Ledru-Rollin was returned without opposition for La Sarthe, M. Garnier Pagès (the son) for the Eure. On the whole, although the Ministers had still a considerable Conservative majority, it was not so compact or well-disciplined as that of the Chamber which had preceded it; and this,

* During the discussion of these railway bills, a tragic event occurred on the line from Paris to Versailles, which exceeded in horror any which has since occurred on either side of the Atlantic. On the 8th of May, a train which was taking a crowded company from Paris to a fête at Versailles, ran off the line, and the carriages, in consequence of the sudden shock, ran one above another, and were almost instantaneously piled *four deep* in a narrow cleft in the line. Unfortunately the fire in the front carriage spread to the next carriage, and being fanned by a strong breeze from the rear, soon communicated to those above, and in a few minutes the whole superincumbent mass was in a blaze. The doors being locked, escape to the greater part of the passengers was impossible, and no less than fifty human beings, a great proportion of them women and children, perished in the flames. A more frightful catastrophe is not recorded in history.—*Ann. Hist.*, xxv. 247; *Chron.* A young mother had a cord passed to her by which she might have escaped, but she would not leave her child who was with her, and perished with it in the flames!—*Ibid.*

in the circumstances of the country, was equivalent to a defeat. A schism appeared for the first time on this occasion in the Legitimist ranks, similar to that which ere long divided the Conservatives of Great Britain. Some adhered to the old and established idea, that any extension of the suffrage was to be avoided as dangerous to the throne; others, better informed as to the social state and real wishes of the vast majority of the *rural* population of France, saw in their steadiness and desire of repose the only guarantee against the turbulence and ambition of the inhabitants of towns, and did not hesitate to invoke universal suffrage as the last and only secure sheet-anchor of the State.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 251, 252; Ann. Hist. xxv. 257.

81. Death of the Duke of Orléans. July 13.

This state of things was big with prospect of change, and perhaps disaster, in future times; but a sudden and most afflicting event occurred at this period, which shook the very foundations of the throne, and induced it sooner than might otherwise have occurred. On the 13th July, the Duke of Orléans set out at noon to go to Neuilly, in order to bid adieu to the King before his departure to St Omer to review the troops there assembled. He was alone in an open carriage, called "à la Daumont," drawn by two horses, the vehicle in which he usually drove round Paris. When passing the gate of Maillot, the horse which the postilion rode took fright and ran off, and by a singular coincidence turned into the *Chemin de la Revolte*, so styled from having been formed, in the beginning of the first Revolution, for the royal family to go quietly to St Cloud. The Prince, on seeing that the postilion had lost command of the horses, called out, "You can no longer stop them?"—"No, your royal highness," he replied, "but I can still direct them." Seeing that they still went on at the full gallop, the Prince stood up in the carriage, and called out again, "Can you not stop them?"—"No, my lord," was the reply. Upon this the Duke, who was very active, opened the carriage-door, and, standing on the step, leapt out. He lighted with

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

both his feet on the ground, but the rapidity of the motion caused him to fall with great violence on his side, and occasioned such a shock to the brain that he was taken up in a state of insensibility, and a few hours after breathed his last in a small house adjoining the roadside, into which he had been carried. The King, Queen, and all the royal family, except the Duchess of Orléans, who was at the Eaux des Piombières, formed a mournful assembly around the heir to the throne, as he breathed his last in the humble dwelling which had become the last resting-place on earth of one torn from such brilliant destinies.

82. Vast importance of this event.

The death of the Duke of Orléans was an event of such importance that it was equivalent to a revolution. Not only was the direct heir to the throne cut off, and the succession opened to his son, the Count of Paris, a child yet in his nurse's arms, but the Prince, who was thus prematurely cut off, was one who enjoyed deserved popularity, and was eminently qualified to have steered the vessel of the State through the shoals and quicksands upon which it was drifting. Grave in manners, reserved in character, his secret opinions were known only to his most intimate friends, and were judged of by the world in general only from the political complexion of his friendships, which were chiefly among men of science and art, or of the Liberal party, and from a few answers to addresses he had delivered in public, which were decidedly of that character. It was known, however, to those who enjoyed his confidence, that he was much alarmed at the dangers which were accumulating, in consequence of the decided resistance to progress made by his father, and his recent declaration against Reform had in some degree shaken the confidence of the Liberals in his measures. It added to the general regret at this catastrophe, that the postilion pulled up the horses a few seconds after the Prince had leapt out, so that, if he had only sat still,

he would have sustained no injury; * and that, in a remarkable passage in his testament, he had expressed his earnest wish that the Count of Paris, if he succeeded to the throne, should be himself a "man of his time and of the nation; that he should be a Catholic, and *zealous exclusive defender of France and the Revolution.*" The ultra-Royalists and Romish party beheld in his death the just punishment of Heaven for the sins of the father in usurping the throne, and observed on the singular coincidence that the blow was dealt out to the heir-apparent "*sur le Chemin de la Revolte.*"[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxv. 259; Regnault, ii. 257, 258.

83. Division of parties on the regency question.

The will of the Duke of Orléans named the Duke of Nemours as the Regent, in the event of his death during the pupilarity of his son. This, however, required the sanction of the Legislature, and the democratic party deemed the opportunity favourable for asserting in the loudest terms the great principle of the national sovereignty. The Government, on the other hand, brought forward a law, the principle of which was, that the regency, in default of a male heir of the full age, belonged of right to the next heir to the throne after the minor heir, who in this instance was the Duke de Nemours. Ledru-Rollin, who led the Opposition, protested against such a doctrine, which, he maintained, was subversive of the whole rights of the people, who were entitled, through the Chamber of Deputies, and without the concurrence of any other power, to nominate a regent on such an event.[2]

[2] Moniteur, Aug. 19, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxv. 260, 261; Regnault, ii. 267, 269.

84. Argument of Guizot and Thiers for the bill. Aug. 18, 1842.

Guizot and Thiers concurred in supporting the proposal of Government. "If," said the former, "you assert that there are in the nation two powers, one constitutional, another constituent; one, so to speak, for working-days, the other for holidays, I answer, that what you

* A short time before this, the Duke of Wellington's horses ran away with him in his chariot, as he was driving to Ascot. The old veteran calmly let down the windows and *sat still*, desiring his servant to do the same, observing: "The first hill will bring them up," which accordingly was the case.

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

assert is a mere dream. I have seen, in the course of my life, only three really constituent powers in action: one in the year 1800, by Napoleon; one in 1814, when it was exercised by Louis XVIII.; one in 1830, by the Chamber of Deputies. All the rest, the appeals to the people, their ratifications, are a mere fiction and shadow." "The law itself," said M. Thiers, "is open to no exception. It is precisely the law which I would have made; and most certainly I was not consulted on it. Even were the law different from what it is, I would vote for it the same. Had the law contained something which I deemed objectionable, and only applicable to present circumstances, as substituting the regency of women for that of men, I should have voted for it with the same sincerity; for, in the present circumstances, I will not say of peril, but of anxiety for the monarchy, the first duty of every good subject is, not to propose amendments, but to give in his adherence."

85. Continued.

"The dynasty of 1830," continued M. Guizot, "has received a rude shock; but out of its very misfortunes has arisen evidence of its strength, the most decisive guarantee for its stability, the most touching conservation of its future! The more grave the trial which it has undergone, the more vividly has the necessity of its presence and the grandeur of its mission become manifest to all the world. It has received everywhere in the country the baptism of tears; and the noble Prince who has been torn from us has demonstrated, in the moment of his departure, how deep were the foundations of which he seemed destined to be the firmest support. There is a joy in that worthy of his great soul, and of the love which he bore to his country. We feel that we have no need to carry to the support of the dynasty which we serve any borrowed strength, any fictitious lustre. It has struck its roots into the earth; there we shall find the foundations of its power. We ask your concurrence only to a law which wisdom sanctions, which patriotism

approves, and we desire that it should be considered with all the calmness which befits so solemn an occasion.

86. Continued.

"When an unforeseen event occurs in the history of a great people, in what way does common sense say that it should be decided? Evidently by the most instructed powers, and those best acquainted with the wants and exigencies of society. The first conditions of good government are, experience and the authority which proved experience confers. When you have at hand such power already located in its proper place, charged with its appropriate functions, master of its peculiar duties, it is mere folly to put it aside on any special occasion, and invoke a new power as extraordinary as it is inexperienced. If from the powers to be intrusted with the decision you pass to the subject matter of it, there is still less room for difference of opinion. The first thing to be considered in any extraordinary contingency is, to put everything as much as possible into the established channel of society; to bring it as soon as possible into harmony with what was yesterday, what will be to-morrow. The spirit of natural sequence, the prudent management of transitions, the maintenance of the bond which should unite all the acts, all the days of the life of society, is an imperious duty.

87. Concluded.

"The peculiar merit, the invaluable force, of a constitutional Government, consists in the due distribution of the powers of the State. It is the important mission and peculiar duty of royalty to carry fixity and strength into the Government; it is the representative of fixity and perpetual power, as well as the executive authority. Whoever considers our institutions and social state with attention, must perceive that royalty has by no means too great strength to accomplish this double object. When the king is in minority, royalty necessarily becomes weakened, both as the perpetual and executive power; it is, both in reality and opinion, less considerable than was foreseen or designed by the authors of the constitutional system. At

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

such a moment, shall we proceed to weaken it still more—to strengthen the movable principle at the expense of the fixed? Yet this is what is really demanded of you when an elective regency is proposed. We, in ruling the regency on hereditary right, preserve all the powers in their appropriate place, and give each the function, duty, and place which the Charter has assigned to it; we maintain the balance of powers, such as the complete constitutional regime has established. You, on the other hand, in establishing an elective regency, would dislocate these powers, and overturn their constitutional balance; you would introduce into one of the powers an additional strength, and do that at the very moment when it did not require it, from the natural weakness under which the hereditary powers are labouring."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 21, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxv. 261, 275.

88. Argument of M. Lamartine for the regency of the Duchess of Orléans.

M. Lamartine, contrary to general expectation, took a prominent part in the debate on the other side, and strongly contended for the regency being conferred, by a vote of the Chamber, on the Duchess of Orléans. "I am not, you know well, the partisan of revolutions. *I detest them*, and will combat, with all the energy of which I am capable, those who foment them. I mean violent revolutions—revolutions by main force. But where revolutions which I may call regular take place—that is to say, the results of a gradual, pacific, progressive change of power—it is necessary only to open your hands and receive them. He is a timid man who hesitates in this way to receive the *apprenticeship of power* which is thus, in a manner, forced upon him. I have combated with the Conservatives when I thought the monarchical principle was in danger; but when, by the consequences of a fatal event, the parliamentary power is called to the inheritance—the exercise of one of the duties of which the Legislature cannot devolve to another without dispossessing itself—it is shameful to abdicate the power which fortune has placed within your reach. To take refuge timidly, in such circumstances, in dynastic succes-

sion, is to proclaim openly to the world that France is incapable of governing itself. I would not make the nation subordinate to the dynasty, but the dynasty to the nation. I would not make the first dynastic; I would make the last national.

89. Continued.

"The proposed law is neither conservative nor dynastic. You call it conservative—it is big with revolutions; you call it dynastic—it is charged with usurpations. It chases a mother, the natural guardian of her son, from his cradle, to place in his stead the competitor for the throne! Such a violation of natural justice and common sense on the subject receives no countenance either from the history or institutions of France. The Salic law, which excludes women, has so little influenced this matter, that, out of thirty-two regencies which we have had, no less than twenty-six have been those of women; the Salic law has never been able to prevail against the law of God and of nature, which says that a mother can have no other interest but that of her son, and that she, and not his heir, is his natural guardian. If we would find an instance in which the guardianship of the mother has been excluded, we must go back to barbarous times, when no law or principle was acknowledged but that of force. Doubtless a female regent cannot command an army; but has it not always been found that, in case of peril to a monarchy, a woman and a child form the standard round which the soldiers and the people most enthusiastically combat? Need I refer to the Strelitzes vanquished by the courage of Elizabeth of Russia, or the war-cry of the Hungarians—'Let us die for our *King*, Maria-Theresa!'

90. Concluded.

"Without doubt, divisions and jealousies, during a minority, will get up in the palace, especially when the discord incident to a constitutional government is fomented by the press and parties in the legislature. But in separating the regency from the guardianship of the infant king, is it not evident that the door is opened much wider for the admission of such distractions? Is

CHAP. XLIV.

1842.

not this to render inevitable perpetual war between two powers, each contending for the government of the mind and heart of the young prince? If the regent carries the day, the heart of the young king is rendered unnatural; if the mother, the acts of the regent are discredited, and the future reign becomes nothing but a continued revenge for the regency. Two rival equal influences, disputing the command of a crowned infant, can end in nothing but a suspicious or submissive prince, an idiot or a tyrant, a Philippe II. or a Louis XV. By your bill you will condemn France to receive as kings those whom you would despise as sons. It is possible that the regent may be a woman of a different religion from the majority of Frenchmen, but that could be no objection. On the contrary, the principle of religious toleration, embodied in the person of the chief ruler of the State, would be a guarantee the more for its firm and lasting establishment. The regency of a woman is the government of the country, and parliament its representative. It is the dictatorship of the nation, instead of the dictatorship of a family or a man."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 21, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxv. 264, 266; Regnault, ii. 269, 271.

91. Result of the debate, and reflections on it.

This debate, and the part taken in it by the leaders on both sides, is singularly characteristic of their respective dispositions, and prophetic of the part they were severally to take in the great struggle between the sovereignty of the nation and that of the dynasty which was evidently approaching. The vote at the moment gave a decisive majority in both Chambers to the Conservatives. The division in the Deputies was 310 to 94 in favour of Guizot's bill, conferring the regency on the Duke de Nemours; in the Peers, it passed without a division. But notwithstanding this triumphant majority, the division was ominous of the future, and big with the foreshadows of ultimate disaster. Lamartine had now openly joined the Liberal party; he had addressed the Chamber in accents which powerfully thrilled the national heart. It was easy to see that he was destined to be for a brief

space the leader of the Revolution. On the other hand, Guizot, with unswerving firmness, had taken his post on the other side, and advocated the descent of the regency to the next heir, because the Crown, during a minority, was naturally weakened, and it required support. Differing from either, Thiers had entirely failed in his design of conciliating the Government by supporting it on a momentous crisis; the majority was too large to oblige them to court his adhesion; and he retired from the debate discredited with the one party, rejected by the other. His last words, on descending from the tribune, were very remarkable: "For my own part, I see nothing but the counter-revolution in rear of the Government; *in its front an abyss;* between them I rest on the narrow space which the Charter has covered. I conjure my friends to bring upon that narrow strip a band which know how to construct, and not to destroy. These words are the result of my sincere conviction; it has cost me much to pronounce them; they will cost me more when I descend from this tribune."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 21, 1842; Ann. Hist. xxv. 290, 291.

92. M. Guizot as a statesman.

The character of M. Guizot as a philosopher and historian has already been drawn; but he was much too remarkable as a statesman and an orator, not to deserve a permanent place in any historic gallery of the nineteenth century. His policy, founded on experience and matured by reflection, was fixed and immovable, and wholly independent of the mutations of passing events. Untainted by vanity, uninfluenced by personal ambition, it was based entirely on public principle; and in the maintenance of that he was guided by the courage of an intrepid, the wisdom of a learned, and the disinterestedness of a patriotic mind. It was his firm belief that the utmost limits of safe concession had been reached in the construction of the monarchy of July; that to yield anything farther would be to precipitate the Government and the nation into the abyss. He was not blind to the dangers with which such a policy was attended, but he deemed it

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

indispensable to face them, to avoid the still greater peril arising from the entire disruption of society, and was willing to stand forward as the champion of order, though it might end in his becoming its martyr. The only way in which he thought it possible to effect this object, was to group around the throne a firm compact majority in the Chambers, which might confer upon it authority, and protect it from all the assaults of the revolutionists; and it was from the dread of weakening or destroying this majority that it appeared to him indispensable to resist at all hazards every advance towards Parliamentary Reform. In the Opposition of all shades he beheld, and as the event proved with justice, not a body of patriots, desirous of correcting abuses in the State, but a band of conspirators watching for an opportunity to overturn the monarchy and seat themselves on its ruins; not the English Opposition of the nineteenth century, but the Jacobite chiefs of the first half of the eighteenth. He was destitute, as all really great men are, of personal vanity or selfish desires. He was ambitious, but it was for his country and the cause of order, not himself; he desired justice, but it was that which was reflected from the institutions he had conferred on France, not that which shone from his own exploits.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, Hist. de la Chute du Roi Louis Philippe, i. 136, 138.

93. His character as an orator.

As an orator he is entitled to a very high place, perhaps the highest as a real statesman in the whole parliamentary history of France. Without the brilliant genius or power over his audience which was enjoyed by Mirabeau, he was incomparably more of a statesman; and in his speeches the political student will find far more that is applicable to the actual state of human affairs. Indeed, no such decisive proof is to be found of the great advance that France had made in real freedom under the Restoration and Citizen King, as in the immense difference between the speeches even of the first-rate men at the commencement of the Revolution, and those of the Ministers of Louis XVIII. and Louis Philippe after a quarter of a

century of constitutional government. The first are brilliant Arabian tales, about as applicable to human affairs as Aladdin's Lamp; the last present the result of experience and reflection, which will furnish subject of interest and instruction to every future age. We admire the first as a brilliant dream, where the eye is fascinated as by a phantasmagoria of gorgeous colours; we turn to the last for lessons of wisdom in real life, where everything has a bearing upon the future concerns of man. Albeit bred at Geneva, and first brought into notice by his activity in the professor's chair, Guizot had none of the blemishes as a parliamentary orator which such a training is generally found to produce. He was neither tedious nor pedantic; he did not prelect as from the professorial chair, nor descant as to a circle of admiring auditors. His early introduction into public life, and discipline in the rude conflicts of the tribune, had taught him the first and most important lesson for a debater—the necessity of condensing his thoughts, of abbreviating his expressions, and addressing himself not to a standard of ideal perfection, but to that very inferior standard which was the measure of the intellects of those around him. Nevertheless, he was never commonplace or superficial; he never forgot principle; he had the rare faculty of addressing himself to everyday concerns and passing interests, without deviating from the lessons of wisdom matured in the closet. Hence, though a philosopher and a historian, he did not cease to be an orator; and he kept alike the attention of his hearers, and was listened to with as much interest from the tribune as ever he had been from his didactic chair.

94. M. Thiers as a statesman.

Never was contrast more complete than was exhibited by the great rival of the Conservative minister, M. Thiers. Heedless of principle, he was devoted to ambition; careless of consistency, he was set only on self-elevation. There is no side in politics which he has not embraced at some time in his long career; but in these varied espousals of different interests, there was not only no inconsistency,

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

but there was the most thorough uniformity in the motives of action. There was no side for which he ever contended, there was no motion to which he ever gave his support, in which he had not clearly before his eyes the Polar star of interest. Yet such was the versatility of his talents, and his power of admirably supporting every newly embraced shade of opinion, that M. Thiers never failed, amidst all his inconsistencies, to attract very great attention, and form a large party both in the Chamber and among the public. His early training as a journalist had given him the power of suddenly turning his talents to any subject, and discoursing plausibly on any theme, or on any side. At the tribune he was rarely eloquent, and never carried away by that flood of oratory which flows from strong internal conviction. But he was always pleasing. He seldom rose above his audience, and never sunk beneath them; his ideas were always those of a part at least of his hearers; and he enjoyed the success which seldom fails to attend those who put our own ideas into better language than we can ourselves.

95. M. Thiers as a speaker.

M. Thiers was the true orator of the middle classes; and it was to the ability with which he followed out that career that his popularity and influence were chiefly owing. He never attempted to lead, and rarely opposed them: he put himself in the rear of opinion, not in its front. A man of expedients—light, airy, plausible—he seldom appealed to principle, and never to the great foundation of morality or religion. But he never failed to put in the very best language, and often to adorn with novel and felicitous expressions, those common ideas which had been previously embraced by a large portion of the nation, and therefore met with a ready reception from his lips. Hence he preserved, even in his crosses and failures, a very great empire over public opinion; while M. Guizot, who was always firm, consistent, and conservative, was never popular even in the highest period of his power.

Notwithstanding his suppleness, ambition, and popu-

His fate as a Minister.

larity, M. Thiers was on the whole unfortunate as a Minister; he never was able to retain power for more than a few months at a time. He was set above all things upon becoming and remaining Prime Minister; but his restlessness and love of interference in foreign affairs precipitated him from the helm; first on occasion of the Spanish intervention, and then on the Eastern question. This arose from his love of distinction and thirst for general popularity at all hazards; a disposition which was entirely at variance with the prudent and pacific policy of the King. With all his talents, he wanted the most essential one in a Minister of State—the faculty of reading correctly the signs of the times. This appeared equally in foreign and domestic affairs. In the former, he brought Europe to the verge of a general war in the pursuit of the vain chimera of French domination on the banks of the Nile, a result which, if attained, could have had no other effect but that of increasing the Muscovite power, precipitating the terrible contest which was approaching between the Western powers and Russia on the shores of the Euxine. In the latter, he was surprised, in 1848 and 1851, by two revolutions, the former of which he had a large share in promoting, but neither of which he foresaw, and of both which he was the victim. For nearly ten years he waged an almost incessant war with the Crown and its ministers; but nothing was farther from his intention than really to impair the royal prerogative—he desired only to wield it himself. He hoped to carry the premiership by assault in the course of the war waged in the Chambers, and in the prosecution of that object he was little scrupulous as to the means employed. His mind was microscopic, not telescopic; he saw present events with the keen eye of a journalist, but he had not the distant glance of a statesman to discern whither they were tending.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 142, 144.

LAMARTINE differed widely from both these very eminent men, and in his public career is to be discerned the

CHAP. XLIV.

1842.

97. Lamartine as a statesman.

clearest proof of the unfitness of the "literary character" to meet the dangers and withstand the temptations of real life in arduous times. Never did genius appear in brighter colours; never was lofty and chivalrous sentiment couched in more eloquent and touching language than flowed from his persuasive lips; never was courage more determined, sustained by feeling more exalted. Descended from an ancient and noble family, he inherited from his ancestors the feelings of disinterested loyalty. Abreast of his age in thought, he had inhaled the whole spirit of modern philanthropy. Monarchical in principle, religious in sentiment, benevolent in feeling, brilliant in conception, eloquent in expression, enjoying unbounded popularity, he seemed to unite all that was venerable in the associations of the olden time, with all that was required by the wants of the present. He stood forth apparently as the predestined champion of the monarchy in arduous times—the bridge which should unite the feudal age with the spirit of the Revolution. Yet did he prove the worst enemy of the monarchy when the crisis arrived, and by his single influence he overturned the regency of the Duchess of Orléans, which he had so eloquently supported in the Chamber, and the throne of her son, of which he had declared himself the Protector. Nay, more, by his brilliant historical romance, the *History of the Girondists*, he had done everything which genius and fancy could effect to clothe in brilliant and deceitful colours the history of the leaders of the first Revolution, and prepare the public mind for the advent and success of the third.

98. His excessive vanity, which ruined everything.

The secret of his discreditable tergiversation not only in action, but in thought, is to be found in that common and lamentable weakness of men of genius, *personal vanity*. After having earned for himself a high and honourable place in the Chambers, by several years service as representative for Maçon, he aspired, in 1841, to become its President. Had he succeeded in that object, he would without doubt have attached himself permanently to the

throne, and been found alongside of M. Guizot when the Revolution broke out. But having been opposed by Government, and failed in attaining the object of his ambition, his next move was to win a place of distinction by taking the lead of the Opposition. This it was which made him support the regency of the Duchess of Orléans; he aspired to be her prime minister, in the probable event of the crown opening to her son during minority, by the demise of Louis Philippe. He himself tells us, that by a word in the Chamber, on 23d February 1848, he could have put the Regent's Crown on the head of the Duchess of Orléans, and secured the succession for her son. But being blinded by vanity, and dazzled by ambition, he then aspired to nothing less than becoming Dictator himself, and for a few weeks he actually enjoyed a perilous and divided share in the Government. His punishment was swift, his fall irrecoverable, and he remains a melancholy example of the insufficiency of the most brilliant parts to compensate the want of steadiness and consistency of character.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 123, 124; Lamartine, Révolution de 1848, i. c. vii. and viii.

99. M. Odillon Barrot.

M. ODILLON BARROT, who also took a prominent part in the convulsions which were approaching, was a man of a very different character and habits from M. de Lamartine, though at bottom he was misled by similar self-sufficiency. An advocate of distinction and celebrity at the Bar of Paris, he had for long been a distinguished leader of the Opposition, and accustomed for above twenty years to the rude conflicts of the Bar and the Tribune. Thus he was not ignorant of affairs like Lamartine, and not liable to be misled by literary celebrity or the admiration of coteries; but from his long success as a chief of the Liberals, he had become impregnated with an illusion little less dangerous. He had unbounded confidence in his ability to direct the mob of Paris; and, while flattering himself he was doing so, he was in fact the dupe of others more designing or ambitious than himself. He was an honest man, of a mild temper, and a benevolent disposition; but it was his misfortune to render himself the agent of

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

others with ulterior designs, which he was far from sharing. He said, in 1846, "I am a supporter of the dynasty *quand même*," yet he was the dupe of M. Thiers in supporting the fortification of Paris. He became the dupe of Duvergier d'Hauranne, in signing a compact with the Republicans; of the editors of the *National*, in becoming the apologist of the tumults; of his own vanity, in thinking he could rule Paris by his influence as minister, instead of the guns of Marshal Bugeaud. He was in some respects happily characterised by the celebrated expression of Royer-Collard, on occasion of the sack of the archbishop's palace in February 1832, "I knew you forty years ago; you then bore the name of Pétion." Yet was this character in some respects unjust; for, if he shared the whole illusions of the Girondist mayor as to his ability to coerce the Parisian mob, he was far from being stained by his crimes, and would never have been implicated in the massacres in the prisons in September 1792.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 119, 121.

100. M. Marrast.

Another man of literary celebrity who rose to eminence in the convulsion of 1848 was M. MARRAST. Like nearly all the persons who attained brief authority during its fervour, he was a journalist. Originally a professor of philosophy, he had come some years before to Paris, under the auspices of General Lamarque, and in the first instance he tendered the aid of his pen to the Government. But with that jealousy of superior ability, *not entirely pliant*, which unfortunately characterises not less the cabinets of kings than the committees of democrats, his advances were rejected, and he was thrown into the arms of the Opposition. He was soon discovered by the *National*, in whose ranks he was afterwards enlisted. Marrast proved the most inveterate and formidable enemy of the throne. Not only were his education and acquirements of a much superior cast to that of the other democratic leaders, but he was a determined man of action, resolutely set on overturning the Government, and establishing a Republic on its ruins. In

the Revolution of 1848, he was the leader who stood forth, and by his decided counsels brought on the crisis which subverted the throne. His early prepossessions were all on the Conservative side; and throughout the struggles of faction in which he was afterwards engaged, he preserved a certain refinement of thought, and delicacy of expression, very different from the coarse and brutal characters by whom he was surrounded. His respect for talent, and candour of disposition, often led him to express in the galleries a great admiration for the speeches of Guizot; nor did he always restrain his sarcasm from those of Ledru-Rollin. But it was for a few minutes only that these his genuine sentiments found vent. When he sat down to the journalist's desk, the necessities of his situation, and cravings of his readers, drove him into indiscriminate abuse of every one on the opposite side.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 170, 171.

101. M. Louis Blanc.

M. Louis Blanc belonged to a different school from either Lamartine or Marrast, but it was one which in the end proved more formidable to society than the ambition of either of these men. A philanthropic fanatic deeply impressed with the social evils around him, ignorant of the real cause to which they were owing, and without any of the practical knowledge which might have served to correct his visionary speculations, he aimed at founding a new sect in politics, and establishing a new order in society. His ideas were taken partly from the community of all things which was established among the *aristocratic* Spartans, each of whom was attended by six helots, partly founded on the precepts of universal charity which are contained in the Gospel. He entirely forgot two things: first, that the Spartans formed a *war caste*, which was maintained by the labour of ten times their number of servants; and that, while our Saviour incessantly inculcates the *giving* of our goods to the poor, there is not a word to be found in the Gospel authorising the *taking* of their goods from the rich by the poor. Overlooking this obvious and vital distinction, Louis Blanc thought he was following out the

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

precepts of Christianity when he advocated a social system similar to that of Lycurgus, which should *forcibly* divide all the property of the State, and distribute it to every man in proportion to his wants and necessities in the form of daily wages. He promised the working classes, in his own words, during a period of extreme disaster, "at present, the means of subsistence during periods of difficulty, wages *equal to those enjoyed during prosperity*, with a participation of profits; in future, the free exercise of their faculties, the entire gratification of all their wants, and *even their desires;* in fine, the maximum of happiness."[1] These doctrines, which betrayed an entire practical ignorance of human affairs, were sufficiently perilous without imputing to him the formation of the *ateliers nationaux*, which, as will be shown in the sequel, he opposed, though they flowed almost necessarily from his principles. Under his system the whole territory of France was to be divided as among the fellahs of Egypt, or the ryots of Hindostan, among certain communities or convents, by whom everything was to be enjoyed in common; and the last stage of European civilisation was to be the general establishment of Asiatic socialism, and the despotism of the Pharaohs.[2]

[1] His own words. Conferences du Luxembourg, April 29, 1848.

[2] Cassagnac, i. 320, 321; Louis Blanc, Nouveau Monde, Sept. 15, 1849.

102. M. Berryer.

To this long list of able and dangerous men who formed the leaders of the "*Extrême Gauche*," must be added another, not less formidable, though belonging to an entirely different class of politicians. It could not be said that M. BERRYER was the leader of a party in the Assembly, for the Legitimists had so generally kept aloof from the elections, that not a dozen votes were ranged under his banner; but his oratorical power was so great, and his private character so respected, that when on any casual question he spoke on the side of Opposition, he proved a serious addition to the forces which Government had to encounter; and though the orators of the Gauche were far indeed from approving his principles,

they were fain to borrow the aid of his eloquence, when an occasion occurred on which they could act in common. He had not a very powerful intellect, and none of the robust mental strength which bears down opposition in a popular assembly; but he had a sonorous voice, and elegant language at command, and great power of moving the feelings. The influence of these qualities was much enhanced by his noble countenance and courtly manners, and the respect which, even in a corrupted age, had been won by a known life of private disinterestedness and public consistency.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 114, 117.

103. M. Duchâtel, Marshal Soult, and Count Molé.

To oppose this formidable band of varied talent, M. Guizot had no adequate parliamentary forces at command. M. DUCHATEL was intrusted with the arduous duty of forming and disciplining the majority in the Chamber; and his mild character, pleasing manners, ready oratory, respectable character, and ample fortune, peculiarly qualified him for the task. He was a valuable ally, and good everyday debater at the tribune; but he was not a great orator, and unequal to a serious crisis. On all such occasions, the weight of the conflict fell on M. Guizot. It is true, he had the support of the veteran military experience of Marshal Soult, and of the noble manners and courteous character of Count Molé. But though both of these gave weight to the administration, and were of essential service in the Cabinet, they could not be relied on as likely to be of much use in the conflicts in the Chamber. The veteran marshal was no orator, and was listened to in the Chamber of Peers, rather from respect for his character than the influence of his arguments; and though Count Molé was a ready speaker, he had neither the practical acquaintance with affairs, nor the vigorous intellect necessary to give him an ascendant in the Assembly. He was an agreeable companion, an elegant nobleman, a distinguished converser;[2] qualities admirably fitted to give him the lead in the

[2] Cassagnac, i. 129, 130.

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

saloons of fashion, but little likely to qualify him to sustain the conflicts of a robust democracy, in the daily conflicts in the forum.

104. Corruption of the Ministerial majority in the Chamber.

Such were the men upon whom was now to devolve a conflict, upon which the destinies of France, and with them, in a great degree, those of the civilised world, were to depend. But in addition to the weakness in debate, the administration of M. Guizot had to contend with two still more serious difficulties, arising from the construction of the Chambers, and the temper of the civic force upon which, in a conflict in the streets, it would have principally to depend. The first of these was the entire discredit into which the Chamber of Peers had fallen, in consequence of the loss of its hereditary character, and the absence of any great fortunes among its members, or any other qualification for admission but court favour or ministerial necessities. So powerful had these causes of degradation become, that the votes of the upper Chamber were scarcely ever thought of or inquired after in any political question; and if any one was accidentally pushed to a decision, the decision was usually 118 to 3 in favour of Ministers. Thus everything had come to depend on the Chamber of Deputies; and though the ministerial majority there was very decided, yet it was doubtful whether the influence of the Crown in the country was not rather weakened than strengthened by its composition. The needy circumstances of the greater part of the Deputies, and the universal thirst in France for official appointment, was the main cause of this discreditable state of things. Both were the direct consequences of the Revolution. The great territorial and mercantile fortunes having been destroyed by that convulsion, while at the same time the colonies and outlets in trade and manufactures had been for the most part swept away, nothing remained for the rising youth of the country but government appointments, either in the civil or military line. To secure these for themselves,

their relations, dependants, or constitutents, was the chief object which men proposed to themselves by going into parliament; and the success which attended the step to several, was sufficient to excite an universal thirst for these highly advantageous situations. Before we stigmatise the French as corrupt or venal on this account, we would do well to consider the circumstances in which they were placed when it occurred, and to ask ourselves whether, if Australia, India, our foreign trade and manufactures, were swept away, less competition for office would exist in the British House of Commons and among their constituents throughout the country.

105. Its great extent.

But it is easier to see to what cause the corruption of the elective Chamber and universal thirst for official employment in France was owing, than to palliate its enormity, or over-estimate its effects. These were only the greater, from all the world being so thoroughly disposed to engage in the same practices, and the fortunate intrants being the object not only of political animosity but of personal envy. The most vehement declaimers against the corruption of the legislature, both in the press and in the Chambers, the loudest approvers of the purity of election, were themselves the most abject petitioners for favours, and not unfrequently the most successful in obtaining them. The system of buying off the Opposition by offices, as well as going into Opposition in order to be so bought off, was brought to even greater perfection on the south than it had been on the north of the Channel. One Opposition chief, who had been particularly loud in a circular to his constituents, against the traffic in places, had modestly demanded only THIRTY-FIVE for himself and his brother. Another, equally virtuous and indignant against the prevailing vice, had actually solicited THREE HUNDRED AND FOUR PLACES for himself, his family, and constituents. A third deputy went still further; he had actually obtained THIRTY-FIVE places for himself and his friends, and he had the effron-

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

tery to move for an electoral inquiry into the corruption practised by the Government; and on 22d February 1848 he signed the demand for a formal accusation of the Ministers from whom he had received such favours. In a word, it was difficult to say whether the King's government or the King's opposition was most thoroughly steeped in corruption, or most ready to sacrifice everything to the attainment of the grand object of universal ambition, the gaining or retaining of offices under the Ministry. The great extent to which this tendency proceeded in France, under the system of uniform suffrage which there prevailed, suggests a doubt whether it can by possibility be checked by any other mode than a representative system, based on *different interests*, which may set one selfish motive to counteract another.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 97, 99; Regnault, iii. 47, 49.

106. Demoralisation of the National Guard.

The second great and serious danger which at this period had come to threaten the monarchy was the demoralisation which had seized upon the great majority of the National Guard of the metropolis. If there is any one truth more than another clearly demonstrated by experience, it is the utter inadequacy of a civic guard to avert the dangers or crush the violence of a revolution. From the time of its first institution in 1789, till its final revolt against the King in 1848, it proved itself utterly inadequate to coercing the excesses of the people. United by no common bond, animated by no patriotic feeling, inspired by no generous sentiments, it yielded to every passing influence, and, instead of forming a barrier against perilous change, became the chief and most dangerous instrument by which it might be carried into effect. The deep game so long played by the Revolutionists had at length come to tell with fatal effect on its dense battalions; *the Government was utterly discredited*, and every act of those in power was, by ingenious sophistry, twisted into an argument against them. Was peace preserved—it was the result of a base submission to England, which degraded France into the rank of a second-

rate power; were the armies victorious in Africa—they were fighting the battles of the dynasty, not the country, and shedding their blood in a cause alien to that of their fatherland; was commerce flourishing—it was enriching the burgher aristocracy by the produce of the sweat and labour of the people. All the efforts of Louis Philippe to conciliate the burgher class, which had placed him on the throne, his support of the undiminished *rentes*, his resistance of all measures tending to free trade, his anxious and successful maintenance of peace, were, by the bitterness of faction, used as so many subjects of reproach against him, and considered as such by the vast majority of the citizens. Sixty thousand of these, with arms in their hands, were enrolled in the legions of the National Guard—a formidable force, not so much from its courage or discipline, as from its moral influence, and the grave doubts which existed as to whether, under any circumstances, the regular troops could be brought to act against it.

107. Resumé of the state of France at this period.

Such was the state of France, socially and politically, at this period. The peasants in the country, forming two-thirds of the entire inhabitants of the realm, were ground down by the weight of debts and taxes, and not practically in the enjoyment of a third of the fruits of their labour; the bourgeois in towns, though prosperous so far as material interests went, were generally discontented, and yielding without resistance to the declamations of the Liberal press, which aimed by their means at subverting the Government; the urban working-classes were impoverished by excessive competition, and seeking refuge from their sufferings in the dreams of the Socialists; the National Guard had lost all the feelings of honour belonging to soldiers, and was rapidly turning into an armed body of janissaries, capable of controlling or overturning the throne. The finances of the nation were in extreme disorder; and Government, to give the idle and discontented bread, was obliged to

CHAP. XLIV. 1842.

add every year several millions sterling to the floating debt of the State, to be expended on public works, from which no immediate return could be expected. The press had become the inveterate and envenomed enemy of the Government, and the majority of talent in the Chamber was ranged on the Liberal side. But, on the other hand, the country, generally speaking, was tranquil; external peace was preserved; the army was splendid and numerous, and had proved itself on every occasion faithful to its duty; and those formidable conspiracies which, for long after the Revolution of July, had disturbed the State, had come to an end. A decided majority in the constituencies was inclined to support the existing order of things, and they secured not only a working, but a decided majority in the Chamber, which the immense patronage at the disposal of Government enabled it to retain in willing obedience. Apparently, and so far as appearances went, everything was tranquil and prosperous; but many deep-rooted seeds of evil existed in the bosom of the State, only the more dangerous that Government, relying on the fidelity of the army, and the strength of its majority in the legislature, was ignorant of or disposed to ignore their existence.

CHAPTER XLV.

WARS OF THE FRENCH IN ALGERIA FROM THE REVOLT UNDER ABD-EL-KADER IN 1840 TO THE FALL OF LOUIS PHILIPPE IN 1848.

1. Description of Algeria, and its three separate regions.

THE northern part of Africa, in which the French have now formed a lasting settlement under the name of ALGERIA, is divided by Nature into three separate districts or zones, which, beginning with the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea, stretch southward till they are lost in the Great Desert. The first of these is the level country known by the name of the Tel, probably derived from the Latin word *Tellus;* the finest part of which, the Metidja, extends over about 1,500,000 acres of arable land lying between the sea and the first slopes of the Little Atlas range. The soil here is of incomparable fertility, peculiarly adapted for the raising of wheat crops. It was from its rich fields that the Romans drew the vast quantities of grain which for so long formed the staple supply of the empire, and overwhelmed Italian agriculture by foreign competition. From this rich and level plain extends to the south a series of eminences, which gradually rise in elevation until they come to the pastoral region, and reach the rugged ridges of the Great Atlas. This uneven surface, watered by the plentiful rains which are precipitated from the clouds that strike against its rocky peaks, is almost entirely devoted to pasturage. Vast herds of cattle and flocks of sheep feed on the immense

CHAP. XLV. 1840.

plateaus, at the height of a thousand or fifteen hundred feet above the level of the Tel, and the produce of which is exchanged for the grain which ripens on the sunny fields in the plain beneath. This region is called the *Sahara;* though that word is in common European parlance applied to the desert which lies still farther to the south, and extends, with the interruption of a few oases, to the banks of the Niger, eight hundred leagues from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. This immense region consists of plains of level sand, and varied only by green and wooded spots, where water is to be found, in which the palm raises its graceful summit above the umbrageous thickets which form the resort of lions and other beasts of prey.[1]

[1] Jouffroy, Revue des Deux Mondes, June 1838; Castellane, Souvenirs d'Afrique, 236, 237.

2. Description of the Sahara.

The portion of this vast region which forms, properly speaking, the French province, is about 250 leagues in length, with a mean depth of 60 leagues, and is divided from one extremity to the other by the chain of the Little Atlas—the superior region lying between the Great Atlas and the Little, and the inferior or maritime between the latter and the sea-coast. The communication between these two regions is formed entirely by three or four dark ravines between overhanging rocks, by which the waters of the first region find their way to the ocean. From the Little Atlas stretch out several lesser ridges like lateral ribs, which divide the intermediate plains on either side, and form so many separate detached valleys, the inhabitants of which are nearly shut out from communication with each other. The whole maritime region, when the mountains of the Little Atlas approach the sea, is composed of narrow valleys, the waters of which run towards the sea, and which, ranged side by side, resemble the stalls of a stable. The valleys of the superior region are more extensive than in the lower, by reason of the waters which, kept back by the barrier of the Little Atlas, have formed vast basins; these have in process of time become drained, by the rocks which

retained them having given way under the constant action of the water. Each of these valleys forms a little world within itself, having scarcely any communication with the adjoining one; and to get the command of two lying contiguous, it is necessary to establish a force on the ridges which separate them. From the sea-coast to fifty leagues inland the country forms the Tel or arable district, and it presents an extent of about 40,000,000 English acres, a surface equal to two-thirds of the whole of England, and second to no part of the world in natural riches and fertility.[1]

[1] Jouffroy, Revue des Deux Mondes, June 1838; Borrer, Campaign in Kabylie, 237, 238.

3. Influence thence arising to the rulers of the Tel.

It follows from this peculiar conformation of the country, that the power which holds the Tel must always be in a great measure the ruler of the pasture or desert tracts beyond it. They depend on it for their daily bread, the strongest bond which can unite man to man; the dwellers in the Tel only depend on those in the Sahara for wool, cattle, and fruits, which, however agreeable or useful, are not essential to human existence. Hence the tribes of the desert have a proverb: "He is our lord who is lord of our mother, and our mother is the Tel." Nearly all the Sahara tribes, in consequence, pay an annual visit to that fertile region. During winter and spring they in general find water and vegetation in the desert; and they roam about from place to place in search of pasture and streams for themselves and their flocks. But towards the end of spring, when the wells begin to fail and the herbage withers, they are obliged to resort to the towns which, from the long-established influence of this necessity, have sprung up in the oases of the desert. They arrive in them with their horses and camels laden with wool, dates, and stuffs, which they exchange for such articles of rude clothing as they may require. From thence they move northward to the Tel, where they arrive in harvest time in the beginning of summer, and again pitch their tents, and remain till the approach of winter

CHAP. XLV.

1840.

reminds them that they will again find water and grass in their native wilds. Thither, accordingly, they return, laden with corn for their winter food, and some small articles of luxury or comfort which they have earned by their labours in getting in the harvest. In the middle of October they in general reach their sequestered homes, and gather in the dates from the palm-groves which are then ripe; and before the winter storms have set in they migrate still farther into the desert, where they roam about from well to well, from grove to grove, till the heat of the ascending sun again parches the earth, and sends them back to their great parent, the level fields of the Tel.[1]

[1] Borrer, Campaign in Kabylie, 239, 240; Castellane, 222, 223, 224.

4. Extreme varieties of the climate.

Unlike what we generally suppose of the African deserts, the varieties of heat and cold experienced in the Sahara and the Atlas are very great. This circumstance augments in a fearful degree the difficulty of carrying on war in the country. The soldiers must be proof alike against the burning heat of the tropics and the severity of the arctic zone. In the higher regions of the Sahara and the Atlas it almost constantly rains, while in the valleys and the desert the rays of the sun descend with a ceaseless and intolerable ardour. The soldiers who in July and August have been toiling under a cloudless sky, with the thermometer at 92° in the shade at night, are called on in December to bivouac on the snow under a cold of 20° Fahrenheit, which often continues for weeks together.[2]

[2] Castellane, 237, 239; Borrer, 247, 249.

5. The Kabyles.

The name of *Kabyles* is given indiscriminately to all the mountain tribes of Algeria in every direction. But in the military annals of France this appellation is given chiefly to the inhabitants of a mass of mountains forming part of the Atlas, lying to the west of the province where the hills come down to the sea. Great part of it can scarcely be approached, at least by an army, except by sea; and the Romans, to secure their hold of the country, accordingly constructed some spacious harbours in the

magnificent bays which are sheltered by the rocky ranges which project into the ocean. The inhabitants of this mountain-range are poor, hardy, and industrious; living in peace in their native villages in the mountains, and for the most part maintained by the labours of agriculture. If attacked, however, by a foreign enemy, none can defend themselves with more resolution; and as they are all armed, and perfectly acquainted with the means of improving the advantages which the inaccessible nature of their country has afforded them, there is none whom it is more difficult to overcome, or whom it cost more to the Romans in ancient and the French in modern times to reduce to subjection. The courage and perseverance with which the mountaineers often defend their country is worthy of the highest admiration, and would enlist our warmest sympathies in their behalf, were it not disfigured, as is the case with most savage nations, by frightful habits of cruelty, which lead them always to massacre their prisoners, sometimes even to burn them alive.[1]

[1] Borrer, 232, 237; Castellane, 350, 354.

6. Statistics of the colony.

The European population of Algeria consisted in 1846 of 110,000, of whom no less than 68,734 were in the province of Algiers immediately around the capital. The native inhabitants, of whom an enumeration has been made, were 1,983,000, in all nearly 2,100,000. But to these must be added the migratory tribes of Arabs, of whom no enumeration was practicable, who were loosely estimated by Marshal Bugeaud at 1,000,000 more. These tribes are eminently warlike, and can on an emergency bring 200,000 fighting men into the field, in part admirable horsemen, mounted on swift and hardy steeds; in part hardy mountaineers, skilled in defending their fastnesses, and in the use of their long matchlocks. Whatever advantages the French may have derived from this colony, riches cannot be considered among the number. In 1840 the revenue from it was only 5,600,000 francs; and even in 1846, after sixteen years of conquest, it was only 24,773,000 francs. Like other Asiatic tribes, the

CHAP. XLV.

1840.

Arabs in this part of Africa are extremely simple in their habits, without artificial wants, and content with the rudest fare; but they are nevertheless passionately desirous of gold, which, when gained, they bury in the earth, or invest in arms or costly ornaments for their persons. This habit may in some degree account for the heavy expenses of the colony, which has proved a serious drain on the French treasury ever since their arms first obtained a footing in the country. Between the years 1830 and 1846 the colony had swallowed up no less than 1,000,000,000 francs of French treasure, over and above the scanty revenue extracted from it. The annual expenses of the colony, including the immense military forces required to keep it in subjection, are not less than 100,000,000 francs.[1]*

[1] Stat. de l'Algérie, 1845-46, 87, 89 (Colonisation).

7. Difficulties of the colony in respect of industry.

Unlike the Transatlantic and Australian colonies of Great Britain, Algeria has never proved a successful field for emigrants. This is no doubt in part owing to the vicinity of the Arab tribes, whose natural condition is now, as it has been from the earliest times, a state of ceaseless warfare with the peaceful and comparatively rich indwellers in the plains. But it is in part also owing to the extreme poverty and inefficient habits of the emigrants themselves who have attempted to settle in the country, and to the neglect or inability of the Government to give a title to the lands assigned to them. So powerful has been the operation of these causes, that in the years 1845 and 1846 the total number of emigrants, French and foreigners, who settled in the colony, was only 1172 and 1882 respectively, although every possible encouragement had been given to them by the grant of free passages across the sea, and otherwise. The consequence is, that

*Revenue of Algeria from 1840 to 1846.

Years.	Francs.	Years.	Francs.
1840, . .	5,610,707	1844, . .	17,695,996
1841, . .	8,859,190	1845, . .	20,425,423
1842, . . .	11,608,478	1846, . .	24,773,625
1843, . .	15,964,425	—*Stat. de l'Algérie*, 1845-46, 350.	

labour is extremely high in the colony, and though the waste lands are assigned by the Government for a mere trifle, yet, as two or three years' toil are in general necessary before any return is obtained, it is long before the colonist can reap any fruit from his soil. The condition of the settler is in general miserable in the extreme. Perched upon arid spots, distant from water, the poor tenants lie panting under the rays of the sun or the blast of the sirocco, and seeking in vain the promised land, which tempted them to leave their distant and oft-regretted homes. Cultivation, in consequence, proceeds very slowly, even in the richest spots; and the agricultural produce of the Metidja is greatly less than when the standards of Charles X. first approached its sunny plains.[1]

[1] Stat. de l'Algérie, 1845-46, 180; Borrer, 226, 227.

8. Exports and imports.

It may readily be conceived that when such, at first at least, is the condition of most of the new settlers in the colony, its exports and imports cannot present a very flattering return. Such as they are, they are chiefly owing to the expenditure of the Government on the supplies required for the large body of troops permanently stationed on the African shore. The imports in 1845 were 99,360,000 francs, and the exports only 10,491,000—a state of things which sufficiently demonstrates that it was the consumption of the army which alone kept alive commerce. The troops in Algeria, since 1840, had risen from 50,000 to 100,000 men, and the European inhabitants from 25,000 to 99,000, and it is their expenditure, drawn from the salaries they receive from the Government, rather than their own industry, which occasions the immense disproportion between the imports and exports of the colony. The entire imports from 1831 to 1845 were 634,000,000 francs, and the exports during the same period only 65,854,000 francs.[2]

[2] Stat. de l'Algérie, 1845-46, 394, 395.

But although not as yet abounding in the wealth which in the British colonies has attended the effects of laborious and persevering industry, there never was a colonial establishment so well calculated to draw forth what both the

CHAP. XLV.

1840.

9. Great importance of Algiers as a school for war.

Government and the nation still more desired, the military prowess of the army. In this respect Algiers has been of inestimable importance to France; and in the severe training which its ceaseless wars have given to the generals and soldiers engaged, is to be found the main causes of the recent resurrection and present formidable state of its military power. The interior of the country was by no means conquered with the reduction of Algiers. For about twenty years after, the Arab tribes and indigenous Africans in the mountains, the plains, and the deserts, maintained a desperate and persevering war with the invaders, as their ancestors had done with the Roman legions. Abd-el-Kader proved as formidable an enemy to the French as Jugurtha had done to the ancient masters of the world. Like them, the modern invaders were compelled to cut roads through mountains and forests, to penetrate deserts, to throw bridges over torrents; and so identical is the art of war in all ages, and such perfect masters were the ancients in all its parts, that the French engineers, in general, had only to follow the still remaining highways with which the Romans had penetrated, eighteen hundred years before, the wilds of nature. The bivouac of the soldiers of Louis Philippe was often spread out within the precincts of a camp of the legions; their fortified posts were almost always constructed on the site of a Roman fort, and often with the very stones which had been cut and laid down by the hands of the legionary soldiers.[1]

[1] Castellane, passim; Borrer, 226, 227.

10. Qualities called out in the officers and soldiers.

In this prolonged and desperate warfare the talents and energy of all ranks of the army were constantly taxed to the very uttermost. Summer and winter they were in presence of the enemy: alike in heat and cold they were required to make expeditions, to be prepared to repel assaults. In the heat of spring, or under the ardent rays of the dogdays, they were called on to force their way up steep ascents, through rocks and thickets, swarming with expert marksmen, or over waterless deserts, where the

enemy, constantly in sight, was nevertheless rarely accessible, except when numbers or advantage of ground gave them a decided superiority. In winter, the garrisons left in the forts to keep up the communications were isolated for months together amidst ice and snow, and often compelled to depend for their subsistence upon a *razzia* or predatory sweep among the herds of an enemy, ever as vigilant in repelling an attack as skilful in effecting a surprise or deluding their opponents into an ambuscade. The very providing the troops in such a warfare with supplies was often a matter of extreme difficulty; the conveyance of them with the columns required great previous preparation, and no small amount of experience and energy on the part of the commissariat. To provide for themselves, and trust to no one else; to construct their huts, cook their victuals, carry their food, mend their garments, and look after their effects, was a matter of necessity to the common soldiers, and soon became a habit.[1] To handle large bodies of men in a mountainous country, and concentrate attacks at the same moment, by many different columns which had to cross ridges, traverse torrents, and penetrate forests in their advance, was the task frequently imposed upon the officers. No military man need be told what a school such a warfare is for training an army; and if any doubt could exist on the subject, it would be removed by the perfection in which the best qualities both of officers and soldiers have been exhibited by the troops brought from Algiers to the Crimean war. In the campaigns to be narrated in this chapter will appear many names which have since become as household words over all the world; and they appear at first with a faint radiance, an uncertain light, gradually expanding in brightness, as the stars which on the approach of night become visible, one by one, in the azure firmament, till with the increasing surrounding gloom they shine forth with a clear and imperishable lustre.

[1] Castellane, 46.

Changarnier, by the common consent alike of his

CHAP. XLV.

1840.

11. Character of Changarnier.

friends and his enemies, is to be placed at the head of this bright band. Though political causes have kept him in retirement since the accession of Louis Napoleon, and he took no part in the war in the Crimea, he has already done enough in those of Algeria, and in the streets of Paris, to earn for himself an imperishable renown. Grave and taciturn, like Napoleon in early life, in his ordinary demeanour, his thoughts were constantly on his military duties, and his ambition fixed on military distinction. No one revolved more anxiously in his mind the chances of an enterprise before it was attempted, no one, when he deemed it practicable, carried it into execution with more vigour or celerity. Such was the confidence which his constant success inspired in the soldiers, that it was a common saying among the men, when he was put in command of a *razzia*, "We already smell the sheep"—a saying repeated by them in subsequent years in the streets of Paris, to the great astonishment of the Parisians; when employed to charge a body of insurgents. When a dangerous expedition was in contemplation, the general commanding in chief sent for Changarnier, who, after maturely considering the chances for and against success, delivered his opinion without reserve to his commander. If it was in favour of the attempt, he received the command, and seldom failed to return adorned with the laurels of victory.[1]

[1] Castellane, 46, 49, 57.

12. Continued.

Like Hannibal, Cæsar, and all great commanders, he was extremely attentive to the provisioning of his troops, and also to giving them, whenever it was practicable, an adequate amount of repose. He was careful also to avoid imposing on them unnecessary fatigue. His practice was, the moment a company arrived on its ground, to pile the arms, lay off the knapsacks, and then every one ran to get water, cut wood, or cook victuals, as circumstances might require. His maxim was, "To eat well and sleep well, are the two most important things in war. Sancho Panza was right when he said, 'The man does not make

the belly, but the belly the man.'" "Couscouss" was the name of his favourite charger, a little Arab, active and indefatigable, which seemed inspired as with a demon when the musketry began to rattle. The soldiers said, "There is then one devil mounted on another." On a line of march he was always at the head of his men, alone, silent and contemplative, generally walking beside his horse, which followed him like a dog, to show the men he did not shrink from sharing their fatigues. But if an alarm was given, or an attack was to be made, he was instantly at the front giving his orders amidst a shower of balls, as if he were on a peaceful parade. On one occasion he was wounded on the shoulder while giving his orders; he dismounted, sat down under an olive-tree, and the surgeon arrived. His first words to him were, "Be quick, I pray, with your arrangements, for the affair is going on, and I have orders to give." The surgeon examined the wound, and his countenance revealed his apprehensions—he thought the bone was broken. Having, however, sounded it, a smile came over his features, and he said, with a joyful voice, "My General, it is nothing; the bone is not touched; in two months you will be able to mount on horseback."—"Rather sooner, I hope," replied the General, with a smile; and no sooner was the wound dressed than he mounted his horse, and resumed his orders with his usual *sang froid* and energy. His genius for war, like that of Napoleon, was marked from the very first, and he only required a larger theatre to have rivalled in renown, as he assuredly did in talent, the greatest warriors whose deeds have illustrated French history.[1]

[1] Castellane, 50, 58.

13. Cavaignac.

CAVAIGNAC did not by any means possess the military talents of Changarnier; but nevertheless he has left a name which will never be forgotten in French story, for with it is indissolubly connected the terrible strife in Paris in June 1848, and the final overthrow of the Revolution of the Barricades. His character was singularly

CHAP. XLV. 1840.

calculated for the discharge of that necessary but painful duty; for, without possessing the inventive genius for war which is closely allied to that for mathematics, he had all the resolution, patience, and energy which are so essential to the success of its enterprises. Absolute in command, slow in comprehension, energetic in action, concealing the laborious process of thought under a grave exterior, he was esteemed by all, feared by many, loved by few. Wrapped in thought, and ruminating his designs in the recesses of his own mind, he lived solitary and secluded even in the midst of a numerous staff, and rarely sought the counsel of others in forming his designs. Like most men of this temperament, he was of a proud and unbending character, disdained to solicit either employment or promotion, and accepted the command awarded to him as his right, not as a matter of favour or distinction conferred upon him by his Sovereign.[1]

[1] Castellane, 332.

14. Continued.

Originally a sincere Republican, like so many men of that party he found himself, when in high command, called on to restrain its excesses, which he did with a vigour and decision never exceeded. Hence he immediately became the object of the most impassioned invective to his former supporters, and hence his character has been variously drawn by writers of different parties, and even by those of the same party at different times. His early training took place, and his character was developed, in the wars of Algeria — the severe school in which all the military talent of Young France has been trained. No one was better acquainted with the necessities of that extraordinary warfare, or prepared more cautiously beforehand the means of insuring it success. His orders to the captains of companies, when setting out on a nocturnal *razzia*,* were a model for

* His orders were:—Silence absolu toujours et de toute manière. Etouffer la toux dans les plis du turban. Pas de pipes. Si on reçoit des coups de fusil pendant la marche, redoubler de silence, ne pas riposter, doubler le pas. Faire des prisonniers avant tout. Ne tuer qu'à la dernière extrémité. Après les prisonniers, s'occuper du troupeau."—CASTELLANE, p. 86.

all those intrusted with similar enterprises. He was appointed to considerable commands from his known character for firmness and resolution in an early period of the campaign, when the French dominion, literally speaking, extended only over the ground which their military posts occupied; and its subsequent extension was not a little owing to the resolution, vigour, and perseverance with which he discharged the duties intrusted to him. In January 1841 he was made governor of a heap of ruins, dignified with the name of the town of Medeah. Being asked how far his command extended, "Load a gun," said he, "with a full charge, and fire." When the piece was discharged, and the ball had struck the earth, he said, pointing to the dust which it had thrown up, "There is the limit of our possession;" and such, in truth, at that period, was very nearly the situation of the whole French settlements in Algeria.[1]

[1] Castellane, 74, 86.

15. Canrobert.

CANROBERT has attained a more enviable celebrity than Cavaignac; for, bred like him in the wars of Algeria, he was afterwards called to the chief command in the Crimea, in a period of anxiety and danger of the army, and his chief deeds were against the Russians, not his own countrymen. Without the military genius of Changarnier, or the indomitable moral resolution of Cavaignac, he was a most distinguished General, and in elevation of soul, and magnanimity of character, he was superior to either. His presence of mind, and coolness in danger, never were surpassed; and it was a common observation, that the precision and rapidity of his orders increased with the danger in which he was placed, and were never so great as when the enemy's balls were falling around him. On one occasion his presence of mind appeared in the most striking manner, and extricated the corps which he commanded from the most serious danger. In 1848 he was commanded, with his regiment of Zouaves, to take part in the siege of Naatcha. The cholera had broken out in his ranks during the march, and had already made

CHAP. XLV.

1840.

fearful ravages. The beasts of burden with the corps were overcharged with the sick and the dying; and it was of the utmost moment to avoid an engagement, for there was no possibility of carrying on the wounded. At this critical moment, while passing a narrow defile, a nomad corps appeared prepared to dispute the passage. He immediately made his dispositions for the combat, and advancing alone with his interpreter in front of his column, he called out aloud: "You know I bring the plague with me; if you do not allow me to pass with my men, I will throw it along with ourselves on you." The Arabs, who had followed his track for some days by the new-made graves which lined it, were seized with terror, and allowed him to pass without molestation. Character, when thus decidedly marked, rarely changes. The same magnanimous spirit appeared on a greater theatre, when he offered the command of the allied army to Lord Raglan, in the most critical period of the siege of Sebastopol.[1]

[1] Castellane, 120, 131.

16. Marshal Bugeaud.

MARSHAL BUGEAUD, though advanced in years when he was intrusted with the command in Algeria, was second to none in the essential qualities of a great general. He possessed in the very highest degree, one which is alike the distinctive mark of military genius and the sure herald of military success—the confidence and affection of his soldiers. In their familiar language they called him "Father Bugeaud;" and it was no wonder they did so, for never did parent evince more solicitude for his children than he did for them. Easy of access, communicative in conversation, familiar without abasement, he felt himself among his men as in a large family, and he was beloved accordingly. These affectionate dispositions were increased by the respect which all felt for his coolness and decision when the moment of danger arrived. Then all eyes were turned to their beloved chief, and the rapidity and *coup-d'œil* with which his orders were given, justified the confidence of the soldiers,

and seldom failed to prove the salvation of all. His talents were peculiarly conspicuous in the strategic arrangement of a campaign, and the converging directions of many different columns coming from different quarters to the decisive point. In the administrative department, and the civil government of the country, he shone equally conspicuous, and it was mainly owing to his abilities that the obstinate resistance of Abd-el-Kader and the Arab tribes was overcome, and the French power established in a solid manner in their hard-won conquest. He worthily earned his Marshal's baton on the fields of Algeria, and was, in the last extremity, called to defend his Sovereign's throne in the Revolution of 1848. He did not prove unworthy of the choice; for had his counsels been followed, and his arm left unfettered, beyond all question the insurrection would have been subdued, and the Orléans family might have been still seated on the throne of France.

17. General de Lamoricière.

Differing from Marshal Bugeaud in several essential qualities, GENERAL DE LAMORICIERE was yet in every way worthy of the high consideration which he enjoyed in the army. Unlike many of his brother officers, he was of good family and aristocratic connections; but this circumstance only increased his influence with his men, as is always the case when real merit is discovered in one of superior birth. His activity and energy were unbounded; his headquarters resembled rather a busy counting-house than the abode of a military chief. His indefatigable activity communicated itself to every department, but scarcely any could keep pace with the powers of endurance in the General. After having worn out all his secretaries, he often retired for the night to his chamber, and appeared in the morning with a memoir on some intricate question, or a despatch which he had composed and written with his own hand when the rest were buried in slumber. His enterprises in general proved successful; and in carrying them into execution he availed

CHAP. XLV. 1840.

himself, with the happiest results, of the insight which he had obtained into the Arab character.* Though his mind was essentially contemplative, and he often turned by predilection from military pursuits to questions of political economy or philosophy, yet no one was more energetic when the moment of action arrived, or exhibited more coolness and decision in giving his orders in circumstances of difficulty or danger.[1]

[1] Castellane, 287, 304, 305.

18. General Bosquet.

If General de Lamoricière was not favoured by fortune in obtaining a greater theatre of action, the same cannot be said of his rival in glory, GENERAL BOSQUET. Called to the brightest destinies, his character proved equal to them. An iron will, a brilliant courage, a thirst for glory, were in him united to a solid judgment, a discriminating intellect, and an extraordinary power of rapid decision in the most trying circumstances. Beloved by those who approached him, from the simplicity of his manners and the kindliness of his disposition, he was yet regarded by all with the respect which never fails to

* On one occasion, an Arab having been taken prisoner, and brought before him, the following characteristic dialogue took place:—

"'Je te connais,' lui dit le prisonnier au bout d'un instant. Te rappelles-tu que c'est moi qui t'ai remis une lettre un soir du Général."

'Oui,' répondit le Général, 'alors donne-moi des renseignments sur les bataillons.'

'Sur Dieu, jamais; je serai muet.'

'Fais attention: je vais faire appeler les chiaous; le bâton frappera.'

'Frappe; je serai muet.'

'Non, je ne vais pas m'y prendre ainsi avec cet homme,' dit-il à ses officiers. 'Bentzman, allez chercher un sac de mille francs et versez-en la moitié sur la table.' Au bruit des pièces d'argent, les yeux de l'Arabe commencèrent à s'ouvrir.

'Tu le vois,' dit le Général; elles appartiennent à toi si tu me mènes où sont tes bataillons.'

'Les gens sont-ils prêts? partons,' dit l'Arabe.

'Ce n'est pas tout,' et il fit signe de verser le reste du sac; 'il me faut ta tribu.'

'Je suis prêt, je te conduirai', dit l'Arabe, qui ne quittait pas l'argent du regard; 'partons.'

'Si tu es prêt, je ne le suis pas encore; mais demain si tu me fais rencontrer tes bataillons, la moitié de cet argent sera à toi.'

'Le lendemain la colonne surprenait les bataillons de l'Emir; et depuis, cet homme fit faire un grand nombre de *razzias* au Général; mais aussi le succès de ces entreprises était rendu plus facile par l'habileté de nos soldats."—CASTELLANE, pp. 286, 287.

environ those who, it is foreseen, are born for great achievements. No one could converse with him without feeling that he was born for command; that he was one of the men capable of saving from danger, when all had come to despair of fortune. Like the youth in Tacitus, he loved danger itself, not the reward of courage; like Nelson, he never calculated odds when duty called. Fortune was not wanting to these great endowments; his subsequent career justified these expectations, for it presented a theatre for the display of these qualities. His name will never be forgotten in British story; for he commanded the noble band of Zouaves who rushed to the rescue when the English Guards were dying at their post on the ridge of Inkermann.[1]

[1] Castellane, 305; St Arnaud, ii. 267.

19. Marshal St Arnaud.

MARSHAL ST ARNAUD was not so fortunate as General Bosquet: he did not reap a harvest of glory, for he was called away when the sickle was just put in. He had not the military capacity which characterised Changarnier, or the daring spirit which burned in Bosquet; but nevertheless he was a most eminent man, and well worthy of a place in the gallery of contemporary portraits. His mind was essentially heroic: he had that thirst for glory which invariably characterises elevated characters, and is of all qualities the most inconceivable to the majority of men. His talents for war shone forth with peculiar lustre in the Algeria campaign; for he was cautious in design and yet rapid in execution, and possessed that talent for combination which was of so much importance in a country so difficult of access, and when the troops required to converge from so many distant points to achieve decisive success. His disposition was affectionate, his heart warm: these qualities appear in every page of his correspondence, one of the most charming works which military literature has ever produced. In it we see, as in Collingwood's letters, the deeply interesting combination of military ardour and pursuits with the amenities and affections of private life. It was St Arnaud's wish

CHAP. XLV. 1840.

that he might die in the hour of victory, after having planted the French standards on the ramparts of Sebastopol; and if not exactly fulfilled, it was so in substance. For his enthusiastic spirit, when on the verge of death from a long and painful malady, enabled him to bear the long-protracted fatigues of the fight at the Alma, and among the last sounds which reached his ears were the enthusiastic cheers of the allied troops when the fiercely-disputed heights were won.

20. Marshal Pelissier.

If St Arnaud exhibited the interesting combination of warlike ardour with domestic love, very different was the character of his successor, who, like him, trained in the wars of Algeria, but more fortunate in the next contest, gave the finishing-stroke to the immortal siege of Sebastopol by the capture of the Malakoff. Stern, unrelenting, and determined, PELISSIER had all the qualities required to bring a sanguinary and long-protracted contest to a successful termination. Such was his determination that the prospect of the most terrific slaughter could not deter him from attempting what he deemed essential to success, or following it up, when once begun, with the perseverance which so often in war, as in civil life, commands it. When in the attack of the Cemetery on the right of the Bastion du Mât at Sebastopol, immediately after he succeeded to the command, the French, after a desperate conflict, were driven at night out of the work they had won, he gave orders that every regiment in the army should be led to the assault till it was finally secured; and he was as good as his word. Nor did he hesitate himself to share the perils to which he exposed his troops, for he led the assault on the Malakoff with an incessant stream of stormers, till ten thousand men had fallen within its walls, and then he himself fixed his headquarters there for the night amidst the perpetual risk of a mine being sprung, determined to preserve his conquest or perish. It was the same in Algeria: he succeeded in subduing the country by a determined prosecution of his designs, regardless, like

Napoleon, of the cost of human life at which it was purchased. And if humanity shudders at some of his sanguinary deeds,—and the destruction of a whole tribe, including women and children, by smoking them to death in a cave, is pointed to as one of the most terrible acts recorded in the annals of the world,—history, in justice, must recount the provocation he had received, and the atrocities perpetrated by the Arabs on such Frenchmen as fell into their hands.

21. The Zouaves.

In the African wars which drew forth the talents and confirmed the character of this cluster of illustrious men, there also arose a body of soldiers who, both in the campaign in Algeria and in the contest in the Crimea, have acquired the very highest renown. The name of the ZOUÁVES will never be forgotten as long as the story of the siege of Sebastopol endures, and it will take its place beside those of Troy and Jerusalem. They were originally intended to be regiments composed of Frenchmen who had settled in Algeria, or their descendants; but the intermixture of foreigners in their ranks ere long became so considerable, that when they were transported to the shores of the Crimea, though the majority were French, they were rather an aggregate of the *Dare-devils* of all nations. In their ranks at Sebastopol were some that held Oxford degrees, many those of Göttingen and Paris, crowds who had been ruined at the gaming-table, not a few who had fled from justice, or sought escape from the consequences of an amorous adventure. Yet had this motley crowd, composed of the most daring and reckless of all nations, become, in the rude school of the wars in Algeria, an incomparable body of soldiers, second to none in the world in every military duty, perhaps superior to any in the vehemence and rush of an assault. Without the disciplined steadiness of the British infantry, who have so often perished like the Spartans at Thermopylæ rather than abandon their post, they were superior to them in the vigour and impetuosity of a sudden attack. So

CHAP. XLV. 1840.

little was it deemed possible that they could ever fail in such an operation, that when they were formed for the storm of Naatcha, in the Algerine wars, their commander said to them, "Recollect, Zouaves, if the retreat is sounded, *it is not for you.*"[1] They amply justified this high character on the fields of the Alma and Inkermann, and at the assaults of Sebastopol. Ever leading the column of stormers, they rushed forward in a tumultuous swarm, which at first excited the apprehensions of the British officers who witnessed it; but this feeling was soon changed into one of unmixed admiration when they beheld how gallantly they mounted the breach, with what vigour they forced themselves into the embrasures, what desperate hand-to-hand encounters they maintained when they got into the interior, and the difficult task of holding it against the assaults of the Muscovites had commenced.

[1] Castellane, 378.

22. State of Algiers in 1840.

The colony of Algiers had hitherto been garrisoned only by an insufficient body of troops, and in consequence it had never acquired the consistency or security necessary to render it a flourishing settlement. Extending from Bona on the east to Cherchell on the west, both of which were on the sea-coast, it did not reach more than thirty leagues to the southward into the interior. Constantine, Milianah, Medeah, Huenza, and Setif, formed its original frontier line of strongholds intended to overawe the Arab tribes in the mountains; but since Milianah and Medeah had been ceded to Abd-el-Kader by the treaty of La Tafna, this line of defence was entirely broken through, and the enemy was encamped as it were in the middle of the French territories. After the general insurrection of the Arabs under that indefatigable chief in 1839, already narrated,[2] great advantage had been taken by him of this commanding central position, and he gained the advantage in several detached encounters, while a French brig sailing from Oran to Algiers was attacked and plundered by the Kabyles near Cherchell. To avenge this affront an expedition of twelve thousand men was sent from Algiers,

[2] Ante, c. xxxiv. § 59.

Dec. 26, 1839.

in March following, and made itself master of that town with very little difficulty. But this success was of little avail as long as Milianah and Medeah remained in the hands of Abd-el-Kader. Sensible of the importance of these strongholds, which, being both situated in the mountains, were difficult of access, the Arab chief had made of the first the centre of his military operations, from whence his predatory bands could ravage the whole of the Metidja, and even threaten Algiers itself. Marshal Vallée, who at this period commanded the French armies in Algeria, perceiving the advantage which the enemy derived from this position, resolved to wrest it from him; and with this view a grand expeditionary force, consisting of ten thousand men, was collected in Algiers, and broke up for the south on the 25th April. To give additional eclat to the expedition, the Duke of Orléans and the Duke d'Aumale received commands in the army, and set out with the troops.[1]

March 12, 1840.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 401, 403; Regnault, i. 247, 249.

23. First operations of the campaign, and capture of Medeah.

They were not long in reaching the enemy. On the 27th the Marshal crossed the Etriffa, and soon fell in with a body of twelve hundred Arab horse, with whom he had a serious encounter; and the following days were spent in continual skirmishing with these redoubtable cavaliers, who retired as the main body of the enemy advanced. To operate a diversion, Abd-el-Kader directed a serious attack with seven thousand men on the French garrison left in Cherchell; but his efforts were defeated by the obstinate resistance of General Cavaignac, who commanded the place. Meanwhile Marshal Vallée advanced towards the Atlas, the passes of which were occupied by the Arab chief with eleven thousand men, which he required to cross before reaching Medeah. The principal one, and that alone practicable for artillery, was the Col de Mouzaia, on the northern slope of which Marshal Clausel, in 1836, had made a road passable by wheeled carriages. The summit of the pass, however, had been strongly occupied by Abd-el-Kader, and

CHAP. XLV. 1840.

strengthened by fieldworks, abattis, and trenches, manned by the Kabyles, second to no troops in the world in the defence of mountain positions and the skilful use of the musket. Notwithstanding the strength of the position, the Marshal had sufficient confidence in the courage of his troops to hazard the attempt to carry it by a front attack. He intrusted this perilous enterprise to the Duke of Orléans, whose corps was formed into three divisions. The first, under General Duvivier, was intrusted with the attack on the intrenchments on the French left; the second, under Lamoricière, was to scale the peak on the right, which commanded the whole position, and having carried it, take the Arab works in the centre in rear; the third, commanded by General d'Houdetot, was destined, during the confusion produced by these flank attacks, to force the intrenchments which barred the great road in the centre. The Arabs and Kabyles made a vigorous defence at all points; and Duvivier's division, when it had forced the summit against which it was directed, found itself enveloped in clouds, which made them uncertain where to go, and caused a temporary halt. But Lamoricière's division, headed by the Zouaves, by a splendid charge carried the peak on the right; his guns were ere long heard above the clouds, and soon a loud cheer announced that the summit of Mouzaia was in the hands of the assailants. Upon hearing this joyful sound the Duke of Orléans pushed on the columns in the centre; a terrible fire of grape on its flank tore the ranks and caused a temporary disorder; but when the French guns came up, they speedily silenced those of the enemy, and the pass was won. Panic-struck after this courageous resistance, the Arabs fled on all sides, and the French standards were planted on the summits of the Atlas. From thence they advanced down the southern slope of the mountains, and on the 17th occupied Medeah, which was evacuated by the enemy.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxiii. 403; Regnault, i. 249, 257.

Marshal Valiée, having left a garrison of twenty-four

hundred men in Medeah to secure his important conquest, returned by the Col de Mouzaia to the northern side of the mountains. But here the difficulties of the French situation in Algiers became painfully apparent. The pass was found as strongly occupied as before by the Arabs; and the indefatigable Abd-el-Kader was at their head, prepared to dispute the passage back. It was only by a fierce attack that the pass was again forced, and the troops passed through and reached Blidah. Thence Marshal Vallée again set out in the beginning of June with an immense convoy of ammunition and provisions, directing his steps, in the first instance, to Milianah, which he proposed to occupy permanently with a garrison of two thousand men, and thence convey a sufficient store of food to Medeah to enable its garrison to hold out during the winter. Milianah, situated on the slope of a mountain which overlooks the vast meadows through which the Cheliff meanders, is the ancient *Maniana* of the Romans, and contains the ruins of several stately edifices which attest its former splendour. It was now, however, only a wretched village in the midst of the remains of ancient magnificence; but its position, like that of all others chosen by the Romans, rendered it a military post of the highest importance. Abd-el-Kader at first seemed disposed to defend it, but on the approach of the French columns he set fire to the town and withdrew to the mountains. Marshal Vallée left a strong garrison of three thousand men, amply provided, to hold the post, and pursued his route by the valley of the Cheliff towards Medeah, with a view to victualling that fortress. To reach it it was necessary to cross a branch of the Col de Mouzaia a third time from south to north. The Arab chief was anticipated by the rapidity of the Zouaves in the occupation of the pass; but he had his revenge by a skilful manœuvre which he adopted, and which brought the French within a hairsbreadth of destruction.[1]

24. Expedition against Milianah. June 4.

[1] Regnault, i. 259, 260; Ann. Hist. xxiii. 404.

Advancing parallel to the French columns, and in per-

CHAP. XLV.

1840.

25. Bloody combat on the Col de Mouzaia. June 15.

fect silence, shrouded by a ridge of rocks, the Arabs reached the summit of the pass unperceived at the same time as their opponents; and as the rearguard was descending the slope towards Medeah, a sudden volley from an invisible enemy stretched great numbers on the earth. Instantly the Arabs, leaping from their places of concealment, armed each with a yataghan, a poniard, and two pistols, threw themselves on the French when reeling under the discharge, and destroyed great numbers. But the Zouaves and the Chasseurs de Vincennes, in number eight hundred, were there. Quickly rallying, they commenced a fierce resistance; the bayonet was crossed with the scimitar; the swords parried the yataghans, and, after a fierce conflict, in which the Arabs with desperate gallantry returned four times to the charge, the French were finally victorious. They had to lament the loss, however, of a hundred and twenty killed, and three hundred wounded—above half of the heroic band thus furiously engaged. The corps, nevertheless, pursued its way with the convoy, and reached Medeah in safety, which was amply provisioned, and left under the orders of Duvivier for the winter, as was Milianah under those of Changarnier. But during these successes, the Metidjah was left without any adequate protection, and the Arabs, taking advantage of its defenceless state, burst into the province, and carried fire and sword up to the very gates of Algiers. Such was the terror in that city, that four hundred military convicts within its walls were hastily armed for its defence, and by an express order, no inhabitant was allowed to go beyond Hussein-Dey, which was only a league from the gates. Of all the French conquests in this brilliant campaign, there remained only at its close the towns of Cherchell, Medeah, and Milianah, each beleaguered by the enemy, and not commanding a foot of ground beyond the range of its guns—a melancholy result for a campaign begun with forces so considerable, and illustrated by so many deeds of glory.[1]

[1] Regnault, i. 360, 362; Ann. Hist. xxi. 360, 362.

The undecided issue of this campaign suggested to the cabinet of M. Guizot the necessity of appointing a more energetic officer to the command than Marshal Vallée. The truth was, however, that the secret of this want of decisive success was not to be found in any deficiency of military vigour or capacity in the troops employed, but in the force being inadequate to the task of subduing the numerous and warlike tribes which held the interior of the country. Sensible of this, the French cabinet increased the national troops in the colony to sixty thousand, and placed the whole under the command of Marshal Bugeaud, whose character promised at once to gain external success and secure the attachment of his soldiers. He resolved to carry the war into the centre of the enemy's power, and pursue Abd-el-Kader at all points, without one moment of repose. The Arab chief, on his side, changed his tactics, and instead of concentrating his forces as he had done in the preceding campaign, separated them so as to keep a sort of guard over every part of the country, and at the same time avoid the risk of any considerable body being defeated. He transported the theatre of war from the neighbourhood of Algiers to Tlemsen and the western provinces of Algeria, where they were strongly reinforced by the Kabyles who inhabited the mountains in the vicinity of Oran and the borders of the empire of Marocco. Medeah and Milianah, however, were still kept in a state of close blockade; and as their garrisons were beginning to suffer under want of provisions, the first care of the commander was to direct convoys, escorted by a large military force, to their relief.[1]

26. Campaign of 1841.

[1] Regnault, ii. 206, 207; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 422, 423.

The expeditionary force of ten thousand men set out from Blidah on the 27th April, and advanced to the relief of Milianah, which was now hard pressed by a large force under Abd-el-Kader in person. Taught by former disasters, the Arab chief made no attempt to prevent the revictualling of the place; and the French

27. Successful campaign of 1841. May 3.

CHAP. XLV. 1841.

marshal having attacked him a few days after the entry, he was worsted in a general encounter, which was only prevented from being converted into a total rout by an imprudent charge which the Duke de Nemours made in the centre; this caused the enemy to retire before the turning of their flank by the 17th light infantry, intended to cut off their retreat, had taken effect. Marshal Bugeaud was extremely disconcerted by this untoward event, concerning which he expressed himself in no measured terms, the more so as the presence of the princes at headquarters, with their large retinue and immense mass of baggage, seriously incommoded the troops. Having revictualled Medeah and Milianah, Bugeaud transferred his headquarters to the town of Mostaganem, on the sea-coast, near the mouth of the Cheliff, which was made the base of operations against the western tribes of Algeria, where the principal adherents of Abd-el-Kader were now to be found. The army advanced along the course of the Cheliff without experiencing any serious resistance, and the important town of Mascara was abandoned without striking a blow. The French general stationed a corps of two thousand men in that town to overawe the western tribes in the vicinity of Oran. Encouraged by these appearances, he sent letters to Abd-el-Kader, inviting him to surrender, and representing the ruin which the continuance of the war was bringing on the country. But the Arab chief replied: "The submission of the Arabs will be represented by a horse without a tail; such an animal is unknown in our mountains: when our mares have produced one, we will send him to you. The injury which your army does to the fertile Africa, in the furrows which it painfully traces in her bosom, is less than is experienced by the ocean when the swallow plunges in its bosom to seize a fish."[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 207, 208; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 423, 425.

Dividing his army into five columns, Bugeaud pressed the Arab chief on all sides: in the glowing language of the French annalist, he found an iron circle wherever he

1841.

turned. While he himself pressed the tribes which dwelt between Mascara and the left bank of the Cheliff with twelve thousand men, General Lamoricière advanced between Mascara, Oran, and Tlemsen; General Baraguay d'Hilliers manœuvred on the right bank of that river, between it and the sea-coast; while General Negrier acted on the offensive in the extreme east, in the provinces of Constantine and Setif. Thus the Arabs found themselves attacked in five places at once; the war assumed a unity of design by which it had never before been characterised; and Abd-el-Kader, in spite of all his activity and resources, found himself unable to withstand the reiterated attacks of so many different corps in different places at the same time. That commanded by Bugeaud in person, setting out from Mostaganem on the 13th September, was for fifty-three days in constant activity, in the course of which several severe cavalry actions took place with the Arab horse, in which the superiority of European discipline and courage was uniformly asserted. The results of this active campaign were very great. Tribe after tribe sent in their submission, or were driven off into the desert: the Medgeers first abandoned the cause of the Emir, and united their forces to those of the French; their example was soon followed by six lesser tribes, who also followed the tricolor standards. Strengthened by these alliances, Bugeaud at length led his forces against the Hachems, a powerful tribe in the west, and the principal source of the Emir's strength. They were driven from their homes to seek refuge in the desert: upon this success the whole other tribes in the west sent in their submission, and on the 28th December, in a vast plain in front of Tlemsen, swore allegiance to a new Sultan, Mohammed-ben-Abdallah, who the same day concluded an alliance, offensive and defensive, with France.[1]

28. Submission of various tribes in the south and west.

Sept. 13.

Dec. 28.

[1] Regnault, ii. 209, 211; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 423, 424.

Amidst this wreck of his fortunes, the indomitable Arab chief still maintained, with mournful resolution,

CHAP. XLV.

1842.

29. Final defeat and flight of Abd-el-Kader. Jan. 26, 1842.

the standard of independence, and when no longer able to keep the field against the increasing forces of the enemy, he shut himself up in Tlemsen, declaring his determination to defend that stronghold to the last extremity. Thither, however, he was followed by the indefatigable Bugeaud, who broke up from Oran on the 26th January, in the depth of winter, to drive the enemy from that last position. Abd-el-Kader evacuated the town on his approach, taking with him a large part of the inhabitants, with whom he retired towards the frontier of Marocco. Though joined by a few faithful adherents in his retreat, others more numerous fell off from his standards, so that he reached the banks of the Tafna, the frontier stream of Marocco, with only two hundred and fifty-eight horsemen. Thither he was followed by the French movable columns, who spent several days in searching for the Emir, and being unsuccessful, they advanced to Tapona, which had been erected into a strong fort by Abd-el-Kader, and formed his principal depot of arms and military stores. This last place of refuge was taken and destroyed, while the Emir sought refuge in the solitude of the desert, and all the tribes in the vicinity laid down their arms. At the same time, General Lamoricière pursued to the last extremity some remains of the tribe of the Hachems, which still on the frontier of the desert maintained the cause of independence, and forced them too to seek refuge in its solitudes. The power of Abd-el-Kader seemed, by this long and active campaign, to be finally broken; he had been driven into the wilderness beyond the utmost limits of the French territory, and the tribes which had constituted his strength were now for the most part ranged under the French standards against him. To secure these important advantages, Marshal Bugeaud stationed General Lamoricière, with six thousand men, in Mascara, while General Bedeau, with five thousand, was placed in Tlemsen.[1]

[1] Marshal Bugeaud's Despatch, Feb. 5, 1842; Moniteur, Feb. 27; Regnault, ii. 239, 240; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 424, 425.

To all appearance the power of the Emir was now finally broken, and the French dominion firmly established in the north of Africa. This flattering illusion was confirmed by the conduct of the chief of the Arab tribes on the frontier of Marocco and the desert, who, like all Asiatics, bowed, for the time at least, to superior strength, and ranged themselves on the side of victory. But meanwhile the Emir was not idle. At the head of a few faithful followers, he went from chief to chief, from tribe to tribe, in the wilderness, everywhere preaching a holy war, and calling on all true believers to join in a general crusade for the extermination of the infidels. In the remote situation, simple habits, and limited knowledge of these secluded tribes, he found resources which he never could have found on the frontiers of civilisation. The horsemen of the desert had never met the French troops: they were ignorant of European arms and discipline, and took up arms at the eloquent words of the Emir, as their ancestors had done at the voice of Mahomet. The French marshal had just sent a steamboat to Tangiers to remonstrate against the shelter afforded to Abd-el-Kader in the Marocco territories, when suddenly the unconquerable chief appeared at the head of 6000 horsemen in the vicinity of Tlemsen, and commenced pillaging the tribes which had entered into amicable relations with the French Government. A vigorous sortie by General Bedeau repelled them from that vicinity, but the Emir withdrew to the desert with his forces undiminished, and laden with booty. Encouraged by the success of this enterprise, numbers of Arabs joined his standard, and the whole French frontier was soon in a state of alarm from Cherchell to Milianah. A long and fatiguing campaign followed, consisting chiefly of cavalry actions, in which, though success was various, yet the advantage was generally on the side of the French.[1] At length, however, an occasion presented itself, in which the Duke d'Aumale

His reappearance.

[1] Regnault, ii. 324, 325; Ann. Hist. xxv. 305, 306; xxvi. 216, 217.

CHAP. XLV.

1843.

struck a blow which affected the Emir in the most sensitive quarter, and powerfully influenced the imaginative and excitable minds of the Arabs.

31. Capture of the harem of Abd-el-Kader. May 16, 1843.

In the middle of May 1843, Abd-el-Kader, pressed by General Lamoricière with the forces brought from Tlemsen, and two other columns which had issued from Medeah and Mascara, was skilfully extricating himself from their pursuit, and making for the mountains of Djebel-Amour, when accident brought him into the vicinity of the Duke d'Aumale, who was coming from Boghur with 500 horse to join in the pursuit. Informed of the place where his redoubtable adversary was encamped for the night, the Duke, without waiting for his infantry coming up, set off with the utmost expedition to make the attack. Favoured by darkness, the surprise was complete. The Arabs were ten to one, but they were overwhelmed by the sudden charge of the chasseurs and spahis. The Emir had scarcely time to mount on horseback and make his escape with a few followers. His mother and chief wife got off with the utmost difficulty, but the remainder of his harem, the wives and daughters of his principal lieutenants, with his whole camels and baggage, fell into the hands of the enemy, whose loss was very trifling. After this disaster Abd-el-Kader fled into the deserts to the south-west of Tlemsen, where he hoped to effect a junction with one of the most able of his officers, Sidi-Embauck, who brought to his standard from the eastern province 700 men, the remains of the garrisons of Medeah and Milianah. Before the junction could be made, however, Sidi-Embauck was attacked and routed by Colonel Tempoure, himself slain, and his followers entirely dispersed. Upon this the whole tribes on the frontiers of the desert made their submission, and for the first time since the French invasion of the country, tranquillity reigned in the whole provinces of Algeria, from Algiers to Boghur, and from Constantine to Tlemsen.[1] In acknowledgment of these glorious services, General Bugeaud was made a

[1] Regnault, ii. 325, 327; Castellane, 372, 374; Borrer, 179.

Marshal of France, and Louis Philippe began to make arrangements for the establishment of the Duke d'Aumale as viceroy in his newly-acquired transmarine possessions.

32. Commencement of difficulties with Marocco.

Though driven in this manner out of his own country, Abd-el-Kader found in his individual firmness and inexhaustible mental resources the means of still maintaining the contest. Retired into the distant wilds of the empire of Marocco, where the wandering tribes dwelt on the frontiers of the great desert, he exerted his powers of eloquence, which were very great, in rousing the Mohammedans against the Christians—no difficult task at any time, but especially easy at this, owing to the serious encroachments which the followers of Jesus were now making in so many quarters on the domains of Islamism. His efforts, accordingly, were attended with considerable success; and in the spring of 1844 he found some thousand brave fanatics again assembled round his standards in these distant solitudes. At the same time he surrounded the Emperor with emissaries who represented in the strongest terms the necessity of all true believers uniting in defence of the Prophet, and the imminent danger of Islamism being rooted out of Africa if all its powers did not unite in defence of the faith. The Emperor was not insensible to these representations, but he was inspired with not less apprehension of the Emir than of the enemies of Islamism, and viewed, not without secret satisfaction, the desperate war which these two enemies, alike formidable to him, were waging with each other. It might have been long, therefore, before he yielded to the Emir's representations, had it not been for an incident which united them together in cordial alliance against the French.[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 394, 395; Ann. Hist. xxiv. 216, 218.

33. Which lead to a rupture.

There had for long been a difference between Louis Philippe and the Emperor of Marocco on the subject of the frontier line of their respective dominions—the one contending for the line of the Tafna river, the other for a considerable territory on its western bank. The dispute, however, had not assumed a very serious aspect till the

CHAP. XLV. 1844.

French began to build a fort at Lalla-Maghonia, on the left bank of the river. "You see," wrote the Emir to the Emperor, "what I predicted is about to be realised. I have always warned you that your compliance would encourage the infidels to make encroachments on your territories, and now you see they are building a tower on your frontier, in order to acquire an entire command over you." At this news the court of the Emperor was thrown into the most violent commotion. On all sides were heard imprecations against the infidels—declamations on the necessity of checking their insolence. Religious fervour, ever so powerful an agent in the Eastern world, shook the whole population. Nothing was heard over the whole empire but the din of preparations for war; and the Government, so far from checking these feelings, gave them the most open encouragement. At a great review held at Mogador, the governor of the town thus addressed the troops: "The infidels are coming; you must prepare to combat them, for you are superior to them, and God is above all."[1]

[1] Regnault, ii. 394, 397; Ann. Hist. xxvii. 256, 257.

34. Attack on the French by the troops of Marocco. Combat on the Mouillah. May 30.

Hostilities began on the part of the Emperor of Marocco sooner than was expected by the French. Without any previous declaration of war, his troops assembled on the disputed frontier in such numbers as obliged General Lamoricière, who commanded in that quarter, to concentrate his men in order to avoid a surprise. On the 30th May a body of 2000 Marocco horsemen, with their standards flying, appeared on the banks of the Mouillah river, and advanced two leagues in battle array into what the French claimed as their territory. General Lamoricière was not the man to decline the combat thus offered. Accordingly, without a word being spoken, or a message exchanged on either side, he advanced to meet them, having General Bedeau with the Zouaves on the right, and Colonel Roguet with the chasseurs and two battalions of foot on his left. The fire became extremely warm as the two hostile bodies approached each other, and the Moors

sustained the discharges of the French with a firmness which could hardly have been expected from Africans who were now for the first time brought into collision with European troops. They even made a considerable movement in advance, with a chosen body of horse, between the column on the French right and a ridge of rocks which bordered their position on that side. Lamoricière purposely made no resistance to the advance of that column, and, when it was fully abreast of the French line, suddenly charged the column in flank with two squadrons of chasseurs. This movement was decisive. Violently assailed on a side where they did not expect an attack, the black horse were divided in two, the advanced portion cut to pieces, that in the rear dispersed and driven headlong back towards Ouchda. The whole Marocco troops now took to flight, and were pursued by the French with great slaughter to the banks of the Mouillah.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxvii. 250, 260; Regnault, ii. 397, 398.

35. Conference between General Bedeau and the Marocco chief.

This flagrant violation of the French territory unquestionably was equivalent to a formal declaration of war, and amply justified the immediate commencement of hostilities. But the French government, anxious not to bring another enemy on their hands, when Abd-el-Kader was still unsubdued, and possibly desirous not to add to the chances of embarrassment with England, already in some degree irritated by the Otaheite affair, by extending their conquests in the direction of Gibraltar, affected to consider the invasion of the French territory as a mere unauthorised act on the part of the Marocco generals. They accordingly directed Marshal Bugeaud to request a conference with the Marocco chief, to endeavour to bring about an accommodation. The proposal was readily acceded to by the Emperor, and the conference took place on the 15th June, in a place mutually fixed on, three-quarters of a league from the French camp at Lalla-Maghonia. General Bedeau attended it on the part of the French; El Guennaoni on that of the African government.[2] Lamoricière, with two battalions

[2] Ann. Hist. xxvii. 260; Regnault, ii. 401, 402.

CHAP. XLV.

1844.

and a squadron, lay at a little distance, and Marshal Bugeaud himself, with the remainder of the army, was still farther back in the direction of Tlemsen. The Emperor of Marocco himself, with 30,000 men, was at no great distance on the other side.

36. The conference ends in hostilities.

El Guennaoni showed himself very accommodating in everything which concerned the Emir, whom he promised to expel from the Marocco territories, and prohibit from entering them again. But matters assumed a very different aspect when they came to discuss the frontier on the La Tafna river. On this point the Arab insisted on that river being the boundary, to which Bedeau positively refused to accede. "It is, then, war which you wish?" replied Bedeau: "well, you shall have it." "God will direct the issue," replied Guennaoni. "And men also," rejoined Bedeau; and with these words they separated. While this was going on, the Arab followers of the Marocco chief's guard, to the number of several thousands, came pressing round the place of conference; several shots were fired into the air, and some of the most forward even shook their arms in the French general's face. The Marocco chief in vain ordered these irregular hordes to withdraw; they refused to obey; the regular guard alone complied with the injunction. The circumstances were critical, closely resembling those which preceded the murder of Sir W. Macnaghten in Affghanistan five years before.[1] Bedeau, however, preserved a good countenance, and withdrew slowly, facing the enemy till he reached his horse, when he mounted and rode off. General Lamoricière and he were of opinion that the insult offered was not sufficiently grave to warrant the commencement of hostilities; but Marshal Bugeaud was of an opposite opinion, and gave orders for the troops to make preparations for an immediate attack.[2] He did so accordingly, and with such success that the Marocco troops were entirely routed, and driven off the

[1] Ante, c. xl. § 124.

[2] Ann. Hist. xxvii. 260, 261; Regnault, ii. 402, 403.

field with the loss of four hundred men left dead on the spot.

1844.

37. Commencement of hostilities with Marocco by sea and land.

No sooner did the French Government receive intelligence of this second insult, than they gave orders to commence immediate hostilities by sea and land. The Prince de Joinville received orders to proceed from Toulon, with three sail of the line and four frigates, and cruise along the African coast. Mr Drummond Hay, the British consul at Tangiers, did all in his power to avert hostilities; and Sir Robert Wilson, the Governor of Gibraltar, sent several messengers to Fez to endeavour to effect an accommodation. Meanwhile Marshal Bugeaud broke up from his camp, and, advancing into the Marocco territory, occupied Ouchda without resistance, and Abd-el-Kader having withdrawn to the mountains, the Marshal retired into the French territory, leaving a garrison in that place. The efforts of Sir Robert Wilson at length brought about a convention with the Prince de Joinville; his fleet stood out to sea, and the danger appeared to be averted. But meanwhile Admiral Owen, with the English squadron, who was ignorant of the convention concluded by Sir Robert Wilson, approached Tangiers, upon hearing of which the Prince de Joinville returned to that town, and made dispositions for an immediate attack. On learning, however, that Admiral Owen had approached only for the purpose of observation, he again withdrew. The negotiations between Marshal Bugeaud and the Emperor of Marocco having again failed, he approached Tangiers a second time, and no answer having been returned within the time accorded by the French Government to their ultimatum proposed to that of Marocco, he made preparations for a bombardment.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxvii. 261; Ann. Reg. 1844, 262, 263; Regnault, ii. 428, 429.

Tangiers is an old town situated on the sea-coast, built on a series of heights lying in a semicircle, descending from a considerable elevation to the water's edge. It

CHAP. XLV.

1844.

38. Bombardment of Tangiers and Mogador. Aug. 6, 1844.

is surrounded on all sides by a high wall, on which, towards the sea, eighty heavy guns were mounted on bastions, constructed after the European fashion. The more elevated of these batteries were placed on two hills about a hundred and fifty feet in height, the others were on the water's edge. Seeing matters growing so serious, the Emperor informed Mr Hay, as the Prince de Joinville was standing in towards the harbour, that he had accepted the ultimatum of the French Government. But meanwhile a steamboat came into the bay with despatches from the Cabinet of Paris, which enjoined, that if the ultimatum was not accepted, the attack should immediately commence. Fortified by this authority, the Prince, disregarding the communication made by Mr Drummond Hay, as to the acceptance of the ultimatum by the Marocco Government, or deeming it unsatisfactory, gave orders for an immediate attack. Accordingly, at daybreak on the morning of the 6th August, the three line-of-battle ships, the Suffren, Jemappes, and Triton, and the Belle-Poule frigate, were towed into the bay by the war-steamers, the Viton, Platon, Gassendi, Pharo, and Rubis. Admiral Owen, with three sail of the line, was in the bay as a spectator, as well as a Spanish squadron and an American frigate. The French took up their ground steadily, the Suffren, which bore the flag of the Prince de Joinville, being nearest to the batteries, and within four cable-lengths of them. The instructions of the Prince were to destroy the exterior fortifications, but to spare the town. This was soon accomplished. As at Algiers and Acre, the Mohammedans allowed the enemy to take the positions assigned to them without firing a shot; the fire commenced on the part of the French at half-past eight, and was immediately answered by the discharge of ninety guns, for the most part of very heavy calibre, from the batteries.[1] But the Moors, not expecting the French vessels to come so near, had levelled too high, and great part of their

[1] Prince de Joinville's Despatch, Aug. 7, 1844; Ann. Reg. 1844, 263; Ann. Hist. xxvii. 267, 269; Regnault, ii. 430, 433.

shot went above the masts. The contest was soon found to be unequal, and at the end of an hour their fire was silenced, and the batteries in ruins. This success was gained with the loss only of three killed, and sixteen wounded, which demonstrated how unequal the contest had been, for in the attack of Algiers in 1816, Lord Exmouth lost 816 men.[1] This was followed by an attack upon Mogador, on the 16th of the same month, which, after a severe contest, was ruined, and the island at the mouth of the harbour carried, after a desperate resistance, by the French sailors and marines.

[1] Ante, c. ii. § 73.

Aug. 16.

39. Critical position of the French, and their resolution to fight.

These gallant and decisive actions sufficiently demonstrated that the Moorish batteries were no match for the European broadsides, and that the days were far gone when the pirates of Tangiers swept the Mediterranean in search of Christian slaves. But it was not by maritime victories that the empire of Marocco, a power essentially inland and military, was to be overcome; the real blows were to be struck by Marshal Bugeaud with the land forces. They were not long, however, of being delivered. The Emperor's son had at length taken the command of the army, and it was daily swelled by the accession of large bodies of savage warriors from the interior, who advanced as to certain victory under the standard of the Prophet, to exterminate the infidels. Fresh reinforcements, consisting chiefly of infantry from the hill tribes, were daily expected, which were to assail the French on the side of the mountains, on which their left flank rested; while the numerous squadrons of the Moorish horse enveloped their right, which was in the plain. In a few days, the enemy's forces would be raised to 40,000 men, while the French had no corresponding addition to their numbers to look for.[2] In these circumstances, the general-in-chief wisely judged that he had everything to fear and nothing to hope from any farther delay, and he resolved upon an immediate attack—a determination which diffused universal enthusiasm in the

[2] Ann. Hist. xxvii. 270, 271; Regnault, ii. 437, 438; Ann. Reg. 1844, 265.

CHAP. XLV.

1844.

army. Yet was the resolution, though prudent in the circumstances, a bold and venturous one; for the French forces were only 8500 regular infantry, 1500 regular and 2100 irregular horse, while the Moors had 25,000 cavalry and 10,000 foot-soldiers around their banners.

40. Dispositions for the battle.*

Having taken his resolution, Marshal Bugeaud made every disposition which skill and prudence could suggest to insure success. To guard against the sudden irruption of the Moorish horse, the danger which was most to be apprehended, the whole army was drawn up in the form of a large square, composed of as many lesser squares as there were battalions. The *ambulances*, or carriages for the wounded, the baggage, the beasts of burden, were placed in the centre, in which also were the cavalry, arranged in two columns, one on each side of the convoy. The artillery was placed at the four sides at the openings between the battalions, which were 120 paces broad. This was the order prescribed for the combat; in approaching it, the arrangement was somewhat different. The advance was made by one of the angles led by the column of direction, on each side of which the other battalions followed, each keeping their square formation, on the right and left. The whole army, when in march, was thus formed in a great rectangle, composed of columns, advancing at half distance of battalions, ready at a moment's warning to fall back into the great square. Immediately behind the leading battalion were two other battalions in close column, not forming part of the square, but at the head of the convoy, and composing a reserve intended to act according as their services might be required. In this rectangular order the whole army set out at three in the afternoon of the 13th; at night the foragers, who had been sent out on all sides of the column, returned to their respective corps, which halted still in the order of march, in silence, and without lights.[1] After resting three hours, the whole broke up at midnight, and advanced straight,

[1] Regnault, ii. 438, 439; Ann. Hist. xxvii. 270—App. 145; Marshal Bugeaud's Despatch, June 14, 1844; Ann. Reg. 1844, 265.

in the same order, towards the river ISLY, on the other side of which the enemy were encamped.

The Isly, at the point where the passage was to be effected, was divided into two branches, both of which required to be crossed before the enemy's camp was reached. The first was crossed before the enemy were aware of their approach, a fortunate circumstance, as the passage would have been very hazardous if made in presence of their numerous and fiery squadrons. The alarm had reached their camp, however, before the second crossing was effected, and when the leading columns of the French reached the heights which overhung its right bank, they beheld the enemy's camp stretching as far as the eye could reach on the left bank, and the opposite shore crowded with the squadrons of the enemy prepared to dispute the passage. There was not a moment to lose, for their numbers were every minute increasing; and on an eminence in their centre was to be seen a dense group of horsemen, which marked the spot where the Emperor's son, with the imperial banners displayed, had taken his station. The battalion of direction immediately was turned towards that eminence, with orders, when it was reached, to move to the right, still holding the summit of the eminence by the left face of the great square. Hardly were these orders given, when the rattle of musketry was heard in the front, arising from the leading files of the French tirailleurs, which were beginning to cross the river by three fords, and had become engaged with the Moors. They pressed on, though assailed by a warm fire from the enemy's light troops, and ere long reached the foot of the hill on which the Emperor's son was placed. Judging from the crowd there that some person of eminence was on the spot, the Marshal directed the fire of four field-pieces on the group, and, from the confusion which soon prevailed in it, evidently with fatal effect.[1] Encouraged by this circumstance, the French tirailleurs, closely followed by the

Battle of Isly, Aug. 14, 1844.

[1] Regnault, ii. 440, 441; Ann. Hist. xxvii. 270, 271; Marshal Bugeaud's Despatch, Aug. 14, 1844.

CHAP. XLV. 1844.

squares, still in the oblong order of march, steadily advanced up the slope, driving the enemy's light troops before them.

42. Glorious victory of the French.

At this moment enormous masses of the Moorish cavalry, hitherto screened by the high grounds on either side, suddenly made their appearance on the summit of the crest on the right and left, and with loud cries charged the French squares. The latter had need of all their firmness, for the moment was terrible, and a heavy fire was at the same time opened upon them by the musketeers, who showed themselves between the Moorish squadrons. But not a sign of disorder appeared, not a square was broken. With admirable coolness, the tirailleurs outside the columns on their flanks retired before the advance, firing as rapidly as they could, and when the horsemen were close upon them, they lay down to give room for the squares behind to open their fire. The Moors recoiled before the terrible discharge of grape and musketry which immediately succeeded; the French continued their advance, and the height was won. Immediately the prescribed change of order took place; the square moved upon the camp, and by their advance separated in two the immense mass of the Moorish cavalry. At this moment the French horse, under Colonel Tartas, issued from the square, and dashed in a headlong charge into the enemy's camp, which was obstinately defended, but at length taken, with the whole tents and baggage which it contained. A serious danger, however, awaited the victorious cavalry in the moment of their triumph. A body of ten thousand Moorish horsemen, placed in reserve in the rear of the camp, suddenly charged them when disordered by success, and scattered over the surface among the tents. But Colonel Morris, at the head of the *chasseurs-à-cheval*, three hundred in number, charged the Moors with such vigour, in a compact mass, that they in their turn were broken, and driven off the field.[1] The whole French army then advanced against a confused

[1] Marshal Bugeaud's Despatch, Aug. 14, 1844; Ann. Reg. 1844, 215; Regnault, ii. 441, 443; Ann. Hist. xxvii. 270, 271.

mass of infantry and cavalry, which was striving to rally in the rear; it was speedily put to the rout, and the whole took to flight. The victory of the French was complete: the Moors lost eight hundred killed, and double that number wounded, besides eleven guns and their whole tents and ammunition; while the French were only weakened by twenty-seven killed and ninety-six wounded.

43. Peace with Marocco. Sept. 10.

These repeated disasters, and more especially the last bloody defeat, convinced the Moorish government that the star of Islamism was not now in the ascendant, and that the only wisdom was to come as soon as possible to an accommodation. The cabinet of the Tuileries had equally cogent reasons for wishing to restore peace to Africa, for its relations with Great Britain at that period stood on the most precarious footing, owing to the Otaheite dispute; and the recent increase of the strength of Admiral Owen's squadron to six sail of the line at Gibraltar, revealed the imminent danger in which their Algerine possessions would be placed, if, when engaged with a formidable enemy on the African shores, their communications with home were to be cut off by the superior fleets of Great Britain. Influenced by this pressing consideration, they agreed to terms with the Government of Marocco, more favourable than the latter could have expected after such a series of disasters. These were, that the extraordinary Moorish armaments on the frontiers in the neighbourhood of Ouchda should be dissolved, the officers who directed the attack on the French on 30th May punished, Abd-el-Kader outlawed and banished from the Marocco territory, and the frontier between the two States settled on the footing on which it stood before the rupture, when the province of Algeria was in the hands of the Turks. On these terms the treaty was concluded, and Abd-el-Kader withdrew into the desert. The Prince de Joinville, who was the plenipotentiary on the part of France, was very indignant that the Moors were not obliged to pay

CHAP. XLV.

1845.

the expenses of the war. But the opinion of Marshal Bugeaud prevailed. "Why stipulate for a payment of money? It would never be paid, and another war would be the consequence of their failure to do so." The Opposition journals in Paris were also loud in their condemnation of the treaty for the same reason, and openly asserted that it was to propitiate England that terms so discreditable were agreed to; but a happy expression in the *Journal des Débats* in some degree appeased their indignation—"France is rich enough to pay for its glory."[1]

[1] Journal des Débats, Sept. 24, 1844; Treaty, Ann. Hist. xxvii. 155, Doc. Hist.; Regnault, iii. 15, 17.

44. Campaign against the Kabyles, and fresh efforts of Abd-el-Kader.

After this treaty, the Duke d'Aumale, who had distinguished himself in the war, was made Governor of Algeria, and Abd-el-Kader withdrew beyond the limits alike of the French and the Marocco possessions into the desert. The campaign was commenced in the following year by a grand expedition of Marshal Bugeaud into the Greater Kabylie, which, after a great deal of hard fighting in the defiles of the mountains, defended by thirty thousand mountaineers, terminated in the submission, for the time at least, of the hardy tribes which inhabited it; and the capture of the important post of Azrou, which it was hoped would overawe them in future. Meanwhile, Abd-el-Kader was not idle; he had again collected a considerable army, but his hostility was now directed against the Emperor of Marocco, whom he accused of having shamefully deserted his cause and that of the Prophet, by having concluded a treaty with the French. He obtained at first considerable success in this new warfare; but the Emperor, having collected considerable forces, and the French frontier being carefully guarded, the Emir ere long found himself reduced to considerable straits, and his troops, as usual with Asiatics in such circumstances, began to desert him. In the hope of reinstating his sinking fortunes, he adopted the gallant resolution of making a nocturnal attack on the Dec. 18. Marocco camp, which, in the first instance, was attended

with entire success. But when day dawned, and the small number of the assailants became visible, the Moors returned to the charge, and the Emir was constrained to make a precipitate retreat. The Marocco columns pursued him with vigour, and he was soon driven up against the French frontier. Finding farther retreat impossible, he made a desperate attempt, at the head of a few followers, to break through the Marocco lines on the banks of the La Malonia river; but he was driven back with great slaughter. Upon this he made straight for the French frontier, which he crossed, and on the morning of the 22d December two officers appeared at the head-quarters of General Lamoricière, saying that Abd-el-Kader wished to tender his submission, which was immediately accepted.[1]

Dec. 21.

Dec. 22.

[1] Regnault, iii. 331-33; Ann. Hist. xxx. 274, 280, 283.

45. Capitulation of Abd-el-Kader, and its violation by the French.

Next morning the famous chief made his appearance at the French outposts, when he was received by Colonel Montauban at the head of four hundred horse, by whom he was conducted to Generals Lamoricière and Cavaignac, to whom he stated it as a condition of his submission, that he was to be permitted to retire to Alexandria or St Jean d'Acre. Afraid he might escape and renew the war if this condition was not acceded to, the two Generals at once agreed to this, and the Emir was conducted to Nemours, where he was introduced to the Duke d'Aumale, the new Governor-general of the province. Before entering, he put off his sandals at the doorway, stood up till the Prince made a sign to him to sit down, and he then said, "I could have wished to have done earlier what I have done to-day, but I awaited the hour appointed by God. The General (Lamoricière) has given me a promise to which I commit myself. I have no fear of its being violated by the son of a great King like that of the French." With these words he tendered to the Prince a beautiful horse, the Arab symbol of submission. The Duke at once ratified the promise made by his lieutenant, but it was immediately violated in a dishonourable manner.

CHAP. XLV.

1847.

Instead of being conducted to Alexandria or St Jean d'Acre in terms of his capitulation, he was embarked on the day following, with his wives, children, and servants, on board a frigate, which forthwith made sail for Toulon, from whence he was taken to a castle in the interior of France, where he was kept with his attendants in strict confinement! It is unnecessary to say anything as to this dishonourable breach of faith towards a noble and fallen enemy. It excited the indignation of every generous mind in Europe, many of whom, especially the late Marquess of Londonderry, whose chivalrous disposition led him warmly to sympathise with the fate of the African hero, made the most strenuous efforts in his behalf; and at length, under a new government, the stain was washed out from Christendom by his liberation, in terms of the capitulation, by the orders of Louis Napoleon.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 294, 295; Regnault, iii. 333, 334; Moniteur, Jan. 15, 1848.

46. General submission and pacification of Algeria.

But how much soever the glory which the French arms acquired in the wars of Algeria may have been dimmed by the unworthy act which signalised their conclusion, the submission of Abd-el-Kader was not the less decisive in terminating the contest on the African shores. All regular or national resistance to the French dominion was thereafter at an end. The Mussulmans received the blow as the stroke of Fate, to which it behoved them to submit as the decree of Providence. The submission of the Kabyles and other mountain tribes, however, was more nominal than real, and they were not finally subdued till 1857, when their entire subjugation was effected by General Macmahon, at the head of the veterans who had followed him to the assault of the Malakoff. But these hostilities, like those so long maintained by the Romans with the mountain tribes in the Rhætian Alps, or by the Russians with the Circassians in the defiles of the Caucasus in modern times, were not proper wars, but the struggles of indomitable mountaineers to maintain their independence, trusting to the strength of their mountains and the tenacity

of their character. They were generally unsuccessful, and of a local description, not interfering with the general administration of the province.

47. General view of Algeria, as finally acquired by the French.

The province of Algeria, thus won after eighteen years of almost incessant fighting, and at length brought into entire subjection only by an army of 95,000 men, constantly fed by reinforcements from France, was now a region of vast extent, abounding in valuable resources of many different kinds, and in part at least of extraordinary and surpassing fertility. The Libya of the ancients, it was for centuries the granary of the Roman Empire, and even at the time when it was devastated by the arms of Genseric and his Vandals, contained twenty millions of inhabitants. At present it did not contain of all nations and religions a fifth part of that number. It was divided into three provinces, that of Oran on the west, of Algiers in the centre, and of Constantine on the east; and its entire length, from Nemours on the west to a little beyond Bona on the east, was three hundred leagues. Its mean breadth was about forty leagues, but in that space was embraced nearly the whole country which was available for human sustenance between the ocean and the great desert. This vast region was checkered by every variety of country, from the level plain to the arid peak, and it was clothed with magnificent forests, exhibiting the richness of tropical vegetation. In the sunny vales, watered by the numerous streams which descend from the summits of the Atlas, tropical plants of every description are to be found in abundance, wheat grows in magnificent crops on the plains, and the climate brings to maturity sugar, coffee, and cotton, and all the choicest productions of warm climates.[1]

[1] Stat. d'Algérie, 1851, 274, 281.

48. Diminutive scale still of its industrial resources.

Although so largely gifted by nature, and bringing to maturity the plants both of the temperate and the torrid zones, this magnificent province, after a quarter of a century's occupation by the French, during the last half of which the largest part of it has enjoyed unbroken

CHAP. XLV.

1847.

tranquillity, has by no means increased in resources and industry to the extent which might have been expected. The exports of the province, which in 1845 were, as already noticed, about 10,000,000 francs, had only increased in 1854 to 42,170,000 francs; the imports of 100,000,000 francs had receded to 81,234,447 francs. The European inhabitants, which at the former period were 94,820, in the latter had increased to 155,607. The army of occupation was, before the Crimean war, still 75,000 strong; the entire native inhabitants 2,056,298 souls.* These figures are very remarkable, especially when contrasted with the vast industrial productions of the same country in ancient times, and the rapid growth during the same period of the colonial possessions of Great Britain, and particularly of the Cape, situated at the other extremity of the same continent, and, like it, exposed to the incursions of savage tribes, whose devastating hostility could be averted only by a powerful military organisation. Algeria is a valuable conquest to France, and it has proved of immense service to that country by affording a field for the exertion of its warlike qualities, and a school for the training of its officers and soldiers in the whole duties of their profession. But it is not a colony in the proper sense of the word; it is a great colonial conquest. The genius of France has in every age been for territorial extension and military glory,

* Exports, Imports, European Population, and French Army in Algeria, from 1850 to 1855.

Years.	Exports.	Imports.	European Inhabitants.	Army.
	Francs.	Francs.		
1850	9,800,000	88,317,000	125,963	95,321
1851	19,792,791	66,950,000	131,283	91,417
1852	21,554,519	65,592,041	132,900	72,950
1853	30,782,592	72,788,015	134,075	74,649
1854	42,176,068	81,234,447	143,387	65,882
1855	49,320,029	105,452,027	155,135	66,789

—*Statistique d'Algérie*, 83, 655: Paris, 1856.

not industrial pursuits or pacific colonisation. There seems little chance of its changing the direction of the national bent in the present, or rendering Algeria, in a commercial point of view, a valuable acquisition.

49. Parallel of the British empire in India and the French in Algeria.

In this respect the British colonial empire in India affords a much closer parallel to the French acquisitions in Algeria; for it too is not a colony, but a great colonial conquest. Yet here, too, the contrast is equally striking, and eminently descriptive of the opposite general character of the two nations. In India, the British have never in any year had more than 50,000 English troops of all arms, and the average number for the last twenty years has not exceeded 40,000, including the European troops in the service of the East India Company. This diminutive force has maintained the British dominion over 180,000,000 of natives, and contrived to discipline and maintain under its banners a native auxiliary force of 250,000 soldiers, at the distance of 14,000 miles from the British Islands. In Algeria, an hundred thousand French have painfully won, and with difficulty maintain, the empire over little more than two millions of natives, within a few days' sail of the French shores. The industrial productions of Hindostan have increased 70 per cent since the British dominion was established over it; the agricultural produce of Algeria, after a quarter of a century of French occupation, is less than it was when the French standards first approached its shores. The imports of Algeria from France are still double the exports from it to that country, proving that the magnitude of the former is owing to the military expenditure of the colony; the exports of India to Great Britain considerably exceed the imports she takes from it, and the balance is paid in cash, the magnitude of which constitutes one of the principal monetary difficulties of our situation. These facts are extremely remarkable, as indicating what so many other passages in history demonstrate, how indelible is the influence of national

CHAP. XLV. 1847.

character, how incapable it is of modification by any change in climate, institutions, or external circumstances, and how decisively it influences the destinies of different races, not only in the seats where they were originally established, but in those to which their descendants have removed.

CHAPTER XLVI.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF FRANCE AND EUROPE, FROM THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF ORLEANS IN 1843, TO THE REVOLUTION OF 1848.

1. Change in the external policy of France in the last years of Louis Philippe's reign.

THE external policy of France underwent a great change during the eighteen years that Louis Philippe held the reins of power. Erected amidst the smoke of barricades, supported by the arms of the insurgents, his throne was not only at home, in words at least, "surrounded by republican institutions," but his external policy evinced a sincere desire to surround his dominions with governments of a similar description. England, from the effects of the long political struggle which terminated in the passing of the Reform Bill, was for the time actuated by similar desires, and hence the *entente cordiale* between the two nations, and the soothing of jealousies which had grown with the strife of four centuries. Each felt that the despotic powers of the north were its natural enemies, and each not only willingly leant on the other for support, but felt desirous of securing the aid of the neighbouring powers, by establishing among them institutions of a description similar to those which they themselves already enjoyed. Hence the partition of the Netherlands, and the establishment of a revolutionary throne in Belgium, and hence the quadruple alliance and change of the order of succession to the advantage of the revolutionists in Spain and Portugal.

CHAP. XLVI. 1844.

But with the progress of time these dispositions were essentially changed on both sides; and what is very remarkable, they changed in both countries from the internal strength of the party *in opposition* to the altered policy of the Government. Yet is it not difficult to see to what this apparent anomaly was owing. England, so long the leader of conservative Europe, was now foremost in fomenting troubles, and promoting organic changes in the adjoining States, because the party in possession of power was threatened by a strong Conservative opposition at home, against which it was fain to seek the support of external Liberalism. France, so long the chief of revolutionary powers, gradually became estranged from them, because its constitutional monarch, perpetually threatened by a desperate anarchical faction in his own dominions, felt himself drawn closer to the Continental sovereigns, whose fixed policy was the overthrow of its machinations. This consideration furnishes the key to the alteration in the foreign policy of both countries, in the latter years of the reign of Louis Philippe, and explains the extraordinary fact which will soon appear, that at its close England was at the head of the revolutionary, and the Citizen King in close alliance with the conservative, powers of Europe.

2. French excitement on the affair of Otaheite. July 31, 1844.

The settled policy of the French Liberals by every possible means to discredit the Government, received a most favourable opportunity for exerting itself in the affair of Otaheite, of which a full account has been given in the history of England at this period. Great dissatisfaction had been excited by the disavowal of the French Government of the taking possession of the island by Admiral Dupetit-Thouars in name of the King of France; and the limitation of the right claimed to a protectorate, only at the request of the English Government. This was of course represented as a base concession to Great Britain, and a lasting reproach to France. Already the Liberal press was resounding with vehement declamations

on the subject, when intelligence was received of the arrest of Mr Pritchard, and his removal from the island by the French authorities. This was made the subject of strong and not very considerate invective on the part of Sir R. Peel in the House of Commons. "I do not hesitate," said he, "to declare that a gross insult, accompanied with a gross indignity, has been committed. The insult was committed by a person clothed with a temporary authority in Otaheite, and, so far as we can discover, by the direction of the French Government. I trust the French Government will make the reparation which, in our opinion, England has a right to demand." The Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen expressed themselves in more measured terms, but to the same effect, in the House of Peers. The French interpreted these expressions, which were perhaps more true in themselves than prudent in Ministers of State, as a direct defiance on the part of England, and both the Chambers and the press took the matter up as a national insult, which it behoved every good Frenchman to interest himself in and revenge.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. July 31, 1844; Regnault, ii. 414, 425; Guizot, Vie de Peel, 167, 169.

3. Pacific views of Louis Philippe and M. Guizot.

Fortunately, however, the Sovereigns and Ministers both of France and England at this period were sincerely impressed with the importance of coming to an accommodation, and not plunging into hostilities for a rash quarrel among officers of the two countries in the islands of the Pacific. Louis Philippe's ideas on this subject were fully matured, and have been decisively proved by his confidential correspondence with the King of the Belgians, discovered in the archives of the Tuileries after the Revolution of 1848.* Sir R. Peel and Lord Aberdeen met him fully half-way, and M. Guizot had the wisdom

* "Les dépêches de Guizot sur Tahiti, *et ses tristes bêtises*, doivent avoir été communiquées à Lord Aberdeen. Je n'ai pas de patience pour la manière dont on magnifie si souvent des bagatelles de misère en *casus belli*. Ah! malheureux que vous êtes! Si vous saviez comme moi ce que c'est que *bellum*,

CHAP. XLVI. 1844.

and magnanimity to run the risk which he was well aware, in the excited state of his countrymen's minds, necessarily attended any concession, how trifling soever, to the demands, if at all menacing, of Great Britain, rather than involve both countries in a senseless and ruinous war. He assigned, with justice and good sense, the following reasons for preserving in the mean time a prudent reserve on the subject in the Chamber. "There are here," said he, "questions of fact and of international right to discuss between the two Governments. They do not always furnish a fit subject for discussion in this house. There are moments when discussion throws light on a subject, there are others when it brings in nothing but fire. It would never do for the tribunes of either house to discuss daily the diplomatic transactions of Government after the manner of the daily journals. I am so convinced that, for the lasting interest of both Governments, it is expedient to abstain from debating this question, that I absolutely refuse to go into it. When things have followed their natural course, when the opinion and conduct of Government have been maturely determined, when the facts of the case and their mutual rights have been fully ascertained between the two countries, I shall be the first to come forward and invite a full parliamentary discussion on the subject." Thus M. Guizot gained, what is of inestimable importance in all such cases, time; and by the concession of a moderate indemnity to Mr Pritchard, the question was adjusted.[1]

[1] Moniteur, July 30, 1844; Guizot, Vie de Peel, 167; Regnault, ii. 381, 383.

No words can describe the fury of the French Liberals both in the Chamber and the country, and the violence

vous vous garderiez bien d'étendre, comme vous le faites, le triste catalogue des *casus belli*, que vous ne trouvez jamais assez nombreux pour satisfaire les passions populaires, et votre soif de popularité. Il n'y a plus d'état qui puisse faire la guerre sur ses propres ressources; et quelle que soit ma haute opinion des ressources de l'Angleterre, je ne crois pas qu'elle puisse y suffire, surtout avec la ruine générale qui ne tarderait pas à suivre, dès qu'une fois la guerre serait allumée. Ce serait le cas de dire, *The world is unkinged.*"—LOUIS PHILIPPE *au Roi des Belges*, January 17, 1844; *Revue Retrospective*, p. 169.

of the journals, at this wise and judicious adjustment of a most difficult and dangerous question. One of the Radical journals gave vent to the general indignation in the following terms: "The disavowal of M. Dupetit-Thouars is a worse act than the Ordonnances of July. M. de Polignac violated our liberties; M. Guizot has sacrificed our honour. The one would enslave France, the other would dishonour it. To weaken the Revolution was the aim of the first, to weaken France is the object of the last. Of M. de Polignac, then, or M. Guizot, which is the more criminal?—he who sacrificed the Revolution at the feet of the Grand Alliance, or he who puts France at the feet of England? M. de Polignac has been punished; M. Guizot cannot be absolved. No! the scandal of such an acquittal will never be given by the Chamber to a country which has exhausted its patience, and shudders to its inmost vitals at the indignity it has received." Whether these declamatory statements were true or not, was a matter of very little consequence to the violent journals by which they were brought forward. It was enough that they, with the general highly-wrought feelings, appealed to the strongest passions of the French people, and forwarded the general plan, which was systematically acted upon, of discrediting the Government in the eyes of the country. So strongly were these feelings impressed on the nation, that the Government was very near undergoing a defeat on the question. The paragraph in the Address, approving of the concessions made to Great Britain on the Otaheite affair, was carried only by a majority of 8 in a very full House, the numbers being 213 to 205. Nine Cabinet Ministers voted in the majority, so that, deducting them, the Ministry were in a minority of one.[1] *

4. Violence of the public journals.

[1] Regnault, ii. 383, 384, iii. 36; Guizot, Vie de Peel, 167, 169; Moniteur, Jan. 22, 1844.

Strongly as these violent declamations on the Otaheite

* "Souvenez-vous de l'affaire de M. Pritchard," said the French Ambassador in London to Lord John Russell in 1847. "A coup sûr, jamais nos deux

CHAP. XLVI.

1844.

5. Affair of the University, and retirement of M. Villemain.

dispute spoke to the national feelings of the French, and violently as they excited the Liberal party against the Government, they yet yielded in ultimate importance to the internal schism which took place immediately after between the University and the clergy; that is, between the abettors of secular and religious education. To understand this subject it must be premised that, ever since the Revolution of 1830, the national establishment for education called the University had remained entirely detached from the superintendence or control of the Catholic clergy, and that the Jesuits had schools of their own under the control of the superior officers of their establishment. But the Government ere long discovered that this entire separation, and the bringing up so large a portion, especially of the bourgeois class, in a state of practical separation from the Church, was too favourable to the spread of republican ideas; and attempts were made in some degree to reunite them. Encouraged by these appearances, the clergy had, under the direction of the Jesuits, ventured on several illegal acts encroaching on the rights of the University. In this they were secretly supported by the Government, which had discovered what an important element, in electoral contests, the Catholics of the rural districts had become. For this purpose M. Villemain brought forward a bill, on 2d February 1844, for the erection of certain schools under the authority of the University, but with a certain power of visitation on the part of the clergy. To

Gouvernements, nos deux nations, n ont ét plus unis qu'à cette époque. L'affaire était minime en elle-même. Nous avions tort jusqu'à un certain point, et il nous était d'autant plus facile de le reconnaître que le Gouverneur de Tahiti avait donné officiellement tort à son subordonné. Nous ne demandions pas mieux que de terminer le différend comme il s'est effectivement terminé. Mais des paroles imprudemment hasardées dans le Parlement ont failli rendre tout accommodement impossible. Il ne s'en est fallu que de quatre voix que le Ministère Français ne fût renversé, et que son successeur ne fût obligé de refuser toute réparation, ce qui aurait entraîné la guerre entre les deux pays."—M. DE BROGLIE à M. GUIZOT, September 16, 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 298, 299.

this proposal the most violent resistance was made by the Liberals, headed by M. Cousin; but the measure was carried by the Government in the Peers. So violent, however, was the altercation, that it ruined the health of the Minister of Public Instruction, M. Villemain, who was obliged to retire from office, and was succeeded in the beginning of 1845 by M. Salvandy. With his accession to office the strife between the secular and religious parties was by no means terminated; and on May 2, 1845, M. Thiers made a formal motion calling on the Government to enforce the laws against the Jesuits.[1]

[1] Moniteur, May 3, 1845; Regnault, iii. 41, 43.

6. Argument of M. Thiers against the Jesuits.

"The moment has now arrived," said he, "when it becomes the Government to take a decided line on the subject, for a collision has already arisen between the secular and religious authorities. Real danger exists; it is mere weakness any longer to shut our eyes to it. This collision springs from a false idea of what liberty consists in, which many think amounts to a power to do anything. To protect the religion of the country is indeed a duty; but it is not less so to make the ministers of religion respect the laws. Is it from the laws having been executed with too much rigour against the clergy that the collision has arisen? No; it has arisen from another cause, which is this: A religious movement had commenced, which might have been salutary if it had been conducted with discretion. But some excited minds saw in that the dawn of a new power; they hoped to find in it the means of regaining for the clergy the entire control of the education of youth. Had this been only a vision, there would have been nothing to say against it. But so far from this being the case, they proceeded to outrage one of the great institutions of the State, the University. And who did this? Was it obscure and unauthorised missionaries? No! it was done by pastors, bishops—that is to say, men who, from their position, are entitled to respect, and on whom their august rank

CHAP. XLVI. 1845.

has imposed the most serious obligations. The Council of State recognised this transgression; but what was done in consequence of it? Nothing, or rather it was approved. By acts of collective authorities, by declarations signed by the whole bishops of a province, the illegal act was supported. By these deplorable acts the collision became serious and flagrant. It is necessary to put an end to such a state of things; and there is no remedy for it but in the immediate and severe execution of the laws.

7. Concluded.

"If in the execution of laws which are incontestable you experience difficulties, the Chamber is ready to give you its unanimous support. We are not the men to throw difficulties in your way, in order to enjoy your embarrassment. The conduct we are pursuing at present proves that, if there are difficulties, we are willing to share them with you. There are not awanting those who assure us that the opinions we advocate would, if carried out, assure to us at no distant period a very great influence. But to all these representations my answer has been, that our first duty is to make the laws triumph, that should our cause suffer in some degree from the energy with which we support them, we will willingly resign ourselves to our fate. Our first wish is that the laws of the country should be executed, and that the wise and moderate principles of the French Revolution should triumph over its enemies."[1]

[1] Moniteur, May 3, 1845; Regnault, iii. 43, 45.

8. Answer of M. Guizot and M. Le Martin du Nord.

To this it was replied by M. Martin du Nord, the Minister of Public Worship, and M. Guizot: "We need not hesitate to admit that the Government is armed against the illegal religious associations. Not one of the laws has fallen into desuetude; but is this the time when it is necessary to bring them again into full operation? No. Collision is threatened; certain imprudences alone have been committed, and they are not such as to call for active measures. The Government is armed; it will make use of its legal rights when it becomes neces-

sary; but a certain liberty as to the time and mode of action must be allowed it. The apprehensions expressed as to the encroachments of the Church are entirely chimerical. If Bossuet or Fénélon were to revisit the earth, would they be with the University in its strength or the Church in its weakness? At the time when these two great geniuses arose there was, as now, a schism between the bishops and the magistrates; but Bossuet the Gallican, and Fénélon the ultramontane, concurred in saying, 'Woe to the kingdom if the liberties of the Gallican Church are understood in the sense of the magistrates!' The Catholic Church is not an army encamped in the midst of France, as its adversaries suppose; it is not at war with the government of the King; the Catholic Church is not an advanced guard of an army opposed to the Government. The Catholic Church is a French and universal church, which in France is under the protection of the Government, which profits by its laws, which respects them, and gives to the whole world the example of such respect. There is no war between us and them; these words are false and deceitful which may be heard in the Chamber, but should not have their dwelling-place there."[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 44, 50; Moniteur, May 5, 1845.

9. Decision of the Chamber on the subject.

Every one felt that these words of the Ministers were hypocritical; that they denied the existence of danger, because they did not venture to admit or face it. They strangely contrasted with what was soon after said by M. de Montalembert on the part of the Catholic party, which amounted to a proud defiance and declaration of unmitigated hostility to the temporal power.* But a great majority of the Chamber, aware of the danger, and

* "Non-seulement tous les Catholiques en France, mais ce qu'on appelle le Parti-Catholique, n'est pas Jésuite, et n'a pas son général à Rome. Tout le monde, excepté les Jésuites eux-mêmes, demeurent en possession des libertés données par la Charte. Ainsi donc l'avant-garde Catholique avait dû déposer les armes; cela fait, il restait encore l'armée tout entière; il restait ces quatre-vingts évêques qui avaient réclamé l'année dernière contre le Projet de Loi sur l'enseignement des enfans, et les soixante évêques qui avaient protesté contre les

CHAP. XLVI.

1845.

in secret fearful of displeasing their constituents on one side or the other, avoided the difficulty by adopting the motion, "That the Chamber, relying on the Government for the execution of the laws of the State, passes to the order of the day." So powerful had the Jesuits already become, that the Government, to avoid a defeat, were fain to take advantage of the forms of the Chamber, which allowed them to avoid an encounter.[1]

[1] Moniteur, May 7, 1845; Ann. Reg. 1845, 275, 276; Regnault, iii. 44, 47.

10. Negotiations with the Court of Rome on the subject, and ordonnance against the Jesuits.

Matters, however, had now gone so far that the difficulty could not be eluded by merely declining to recognise it; and Government were anxious, if possible, to bring so interesting and agitating a question to a final adjustment. For this purpose, a member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, M. Rossi, was sent to Rome, in the summer of 1845, to endeavour to obtain from the Pope a formal order on the Jesuits to close their establishments and leave France. The Court of Rome at first endeavoured to avoid the difficulty, by pleading their incompetence to interfere with the internal laws of France; but, on a powerful representation of the difficulties to which the present state of things exposed the Government of France, they at length relented, and an order was issued by the Holy See enjoining the Jesuits to submit to the laws of the State. They professed obedience, and ostentatiously closed some of their establishments; but it was in name and form only. Under the title of "Fathers of the Faith," they continued their labours as zealously as before. To adjust matters, a royal commission was issued on August 10, for the purpose of revising and reducing to one distinct code all the various statutes and ordonnances relating to the University;[2] and by another ordonnance, soon after, the Royal

Aug. 10, 1845.

Dec. 7, 1845.

[2] Moniteur, Dec. 8, 1845; Regnault, iii. 50, 55.

envahissemens du Pouvoir temporel sur la liberté de conscience. Rien n'était fixé, rien n'était changé, il n'y avait qu'un prétexte de moins : la question de la liberté de l'enseignement, de la liberté religieuse, restait entière. Irait on à Rome demander l'approbation du Monopole Universitaire? Cela était essentiel, sinon la lutte serait longue encore. Une main sur l'Evangile, et l'autre sur la Charte, nous continuerons la lutte que nous avons engagée contre le monopole; nous vous attendrons sur ce terrain-là l'année prochaine." —*Moniteur*, May 5, 1845.

Council of the University was declared to rest on the basis of the organic decree of Napoleon, 17th March 1800, which first established that celebrated body, and all subsequent decrees or ordonnances were revoked or declared to be illegal.

11. Effect of these measures.

This was a great advantage to the Jesuits, for it virtually abrogated all that had subsequently been enacted against them, especially since the Revolution of 1830. As such it was strongly opposed by M. Cousin and the secular education party in the Chamber, who contended that, under pretence of re-establishing the system of general education on its original basis, the real object of the ordonnance was to subject it to Cabinet influence. "Demand arbitrary power if you will," said M. Royer-Collard, "but do not disguise your demand under a legal form." M. Odillon Barrot and the Liberals joined M. Cousin and Royer-Collard on this occasion; but the Government succeeded in obtaining an adjournment of the discussion *sine die*, the result of which was that the royal ordonnance of 7th December 1845 remained untouched. This debate between the secular and religious party thus terminated at the time, not in an overt, but a real and considerable advantage to the clergy, who not only remained in possession of the ground they had gained, but acquired a great deal more;—a memorable example of the patient and persevering policy of the Church of Rome, and its able militia the Jesuits; and of the manner in which the influence of religion, so seriously weakened during the time it was in alliance with power, had been regained when it was entirely detached from it. A close prisoner in the Château of Ham, Prince Louis Napoleon was no unconcerned spectator of these changes; and on this observation was based his idea, afterwards so marvellously carried into execution, of basing an imperial throne and despotic power on universal suffrage and religious influence.[1]

Feb. 21, 1846.

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 22, 1846; Ann. Hist. 1846, 64, 67; Regnault, iii. 57, 62.

At this period, the heat having in some degree subsided on both sides, M. Guizot and Lord Aberdeen suc-

CHAP. XLVI.

1845.

12. Treaty regarding the right of search for slaves. May 24, 1845.

ceeded in concluding a treaty regulating the right of search for negroes crossing the Atlantic. It was arranged between the Duke de Broglie on the part of France, and Dr Lushington on that of England. The *reciprocal* right of search was no longer expressly insisted on, but it was stipulated that each of the two contracting parties was to maintain a force of twenty-six armed sailing vessels or steamers to cruise on the western coast of Africa, from the Cape de Verde Islands to the 16° 30′ of south latitude, and that these forces should act in every respect in concert, and in full possession of the powers of which the Crowns of France and England are in possession for the suppression of the slave trade. The delicate matter of the reciprocal right of search was eluded rather than adjusted by the following clause: "Considering that, though the flag borne by the ship is *primâ facie* proof of its nationality, yet that presumption cannot be considered as sufficient in every case to bar a visit for its verification, seeing that, were it otherwise, the flags of all nations might be abused by being converted into a cover for piracy, the slave trade, or any other illicit traffic; and in order to prevent all difficulties in the execution of this convention, it is agreed that instructions *founded on the law of nations, and the constant practice of maritime powers*, shall be addressed to the commanders of the French and English squadrons and stations on the coast of Africa." The treaty was to be in force for ten years from its date, which was 29th May 1845. It is evident that the difficulty was only eluded by these ambiguous words, since there was no declaration what the law of nations on the subject really was. But the jealousy of the French was appeased by there being no *express* recognition of the right of search on the face of the treaty; and the national passions having taken a different direction, the Liberals no longer made this an engine for discrediting the Government, and the treaty was ratified and carried into execution without further objection.[1]

[1] Treaty, May 29, 1845, Martin's Sup.; Regnault, iii. 446, 449.

13. State of Poland since the termination of the war.

All-important as this topic of religious education was to the future interests of France and the fate of its Government, it yielded in present interest to the excitement produced at this period by the insurrection which broke out in Gallicia, followed by the destruction of the little republic of Cracow, established by the treaty of Vienna in 1815, and its incorporation with the vast dominions of the house of Austria. To understand how this came about, it must be premised that the condition of the native Poles since the last partition in 1794 had been very different in the portions allotted to the three partitioning powers. The Russians, aware that the nobles were the class in which the hostility to them was strongest, and fearful of the effects of a national revolution on the extreme frontier of their immense empire, had made the greatest efforts to ameliorate the condition of the peasants. Like the English in India, and for a similar reason, they sought a counterpoise to the enmity of the nobles in the attachment of the great body of the cultivators of the soil. Wielding despotic authority, and intent on this object, they carried through innovations, and established improvements which, under no other circumstances, could have been effected in so short a time. The condition of the peasants became greatly superior to what it had ever been under the old national government, and their stormy *Comitia*. The peasants were all emancipated, and put on the footing of farmers, entitled to the whole fruits of their toil, after satisfying the rent of the landlord; and the Code Napoleon was made the basis of these laws, which has proved so unspeakable a blessing to many states in Europe. Russia has reaped the full benefit of those wise ameliorations, in the tranquillity of her Polish provinces under circumstances of no ordinary peril, when she was waging a desperate and consuming war with France and England in the Crimea, and the chief military strength of the empire was grouped around Wilna to make head against the threatened hostility of Austria.[1]

[1] Tegoborski, Etat de Russie, iv. 272,274 Regnault, iii. 69.

CHAP. XLVI.

1845.

14. Beneficial changes in Prussian Poland.

In Prussian Poland, styled the Grand-Duchy of Posen, the changes were still more radical, and perhaps erred on the side of undue concession to the popular demands. In 1817, the Prussian Government, under the direction of the able and patriotic Baron Stein, had adopted a change which a revolutionary government would hardly have ventured to promulgate; they established to a certain extent an agrarian law. In lieu of the services in kind, which by the old law they were bound to give to their landlords, in consideration of being maintained by them, the peasants received a third of the land they cultivated in property to themselves, and they were left to provide for their own subsistence. The old prohibition against the sale of lands on the part of the nobles was taken away, and facilities given for the purchase of the remaining two-thirds by the peasants, by permitting twenty-five years for paying up the price. This was a very great change, which at first sight seemed to be fraught with the dangers of revolutionary innovation; but being free of the most dangerous element in such changes—the excited passions of the people—it was not attended with any such effects. The nobles, who were to appearance despoiled of a third of their land, ere long found that, from the enhanced value of the remainder, and being freed from the obligation of maintaining their peasants, they were in effect gainers by the change, and they were perfectly contented with it. In a word, this great change of Baron Stein's was not a revolutionary innovation in the proper sense of the word, but a wise and well-considered mode of making the transition from the mixed state of property, and burden of maintenance implied in serfdom, to the state of separate and unburdened possession which belongs to freedom, somewhat akin to the giving the slaves two days a-week to work on their own account, and banana-grounds, in the West Indies, which is found to be a benefit to the masters rather than the reverse.[1]

[1] Stein's Lebensgeschichte, v. 247, 281; Regnault, ii. 69, 70.

In Austrian Poland, on the other hand, and especially in that large portion of it called Gallicia, although certain changes had been introduced with a view to ameliorating the condition of the peasants, they had not been so well considered, and had by no means been attended by the same beneficial results. The serfs were in form emancipated, and the proprietor was even bound to furnish them with pieces of land adequate to the maintenance of themselves and their families. If matters had stopped here, all would have been well; the insurrection which followed would have been prevented, and the frightful calamities which followed in its train would have been spared to humanity. But unfortunately the peasants, instead of being left in the undisturbed possession of their patches of ground, were subjected to a great variety of feudal services and restrictions, which being novel, and such as they had never previously been accustomed to, excited very great discontent. The cultivators, though entitled to the fruits of their little bit of ground, were not, properly speaking, proprietors; they could neither alienate them nor acquire other domains; and if any of them abandoned his possession, it devolved, as a matter of course, to another peasant, who became subjected to the *corvées* and seignorial rights exigible from every occupant of the land. On the other hand, the nobles, who alone could hold lands in fee-simple, were not entitled to sell them, and this reduced almost to nothing the value of such estates as were charged with debt. So strongly was this grievance felt, that numerous petitions were presented to the Aulic Council, praying for deliverance from the onerous exclusive privilege of holding lands. At length the Government yielded, and the sale of lands was authorised. Immediately a class of small proprietors began to arise, who promised, by the possession of a little capital and habits of industry, to be of the utmost service to the country. But Metternich and the Government ere long took the alarm at the democratic ideas prevalent among

15. State of things in Gallicia.

CHAP. XLVI.

1845.

these new landholders, especially in the year 1819, when all Europe was in commotion; and by an imperial edict, published in 1819, the perilous privilege of exclusively holding land was generally re-established. The only exception was in favour of the burghers of Leopol, who were almost entirely of German origin, and were permitted to acquire and hold lands.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 70, 71; Ann. Reg. 1845, 273, 275.

16. Disputes about the Corvées.

The *corvée* also, or legal obligation on the part of the peasants to pay the rent of their lands in the form of labour rendered to their landlords, either on that portion of the estate which remained in his natural possession, or on the public roads, excited great discontent. Nothing could be more reasonable than such an arrangement, which is also established in Russia, Hungary, and several other parts of Europe, and is still to be found in various counties of Scotland. In truth, it is the only way in which rent *can* be paid in those remote districts where the sale of produce is difficult or impossible, and the cultivator has no other way of discharging what he owes to his landlord but by services in kind. Both parties, however, in Gallicia, expressed the utmost dissatisfaction at this state of things. The landlords sighed for payments in money, which might enable them to join the gaieties or share in the pleasures of Vienna or Warsaw; while the peasants anxiously desired to be delivered from all obligations to render personal service to their landlords, and allowed to exert their whole industry on their possessions for their own behoof. Both parties were led to be the more anxious to desire a commutation of feudal services from the example of Austria Proper, where it had recently been established, and with the happiest effects. So numerous were the petitions on the subject presented to Government, that they laid down certain regulations for the commutation of services in kind into money payments; but the formalities required were so onerous and minute, that they remained generally inoperative, and the services in kind continued to be rendered as before. At length

the whole states of Gallicia presented a formal demand to the Government for the entire abolition of *corvées* in that province; but the Cabinet of Vienna eluded the demand, alleging that, before it could be carried into effect, a regular survey or *cadastre* would require to be made of the whole province, and that they had no funds to meet the expenses of such an undertaking. Upon this the nobles formally declared, in a general assembly of the Four Estates, that they would themselves bear the whole expense of the survey; but with their characteristic habits of procrastination, the Austrian Government allowed the offer to remain without an answer. Meanwhile, as the cognisance of all disputes between the landlords and their peasants was devolved upon the Austrian authorities, and as the taxes were progressively rising, the Government shared in the whole unpopularity accruing from the vexed question of the *corvées*, and the discontent, both among the nobles and peasants of the country, became universal.[1]

1845. July 7, 1845. [1] Regnault, iii. 72, 74; Ann. Hist. 1845, 277, 279.

17. Spread of Socialism in Gallicia.

These causes of difference were in themselves sufficiently alarming; but they would have passed over without serious commotion, had it not been for the efforts of the Socialists, who seized upon the rude, unlettered peasants of this province, who in every age have shown themselves in an especial manner prone to illusion and superstition, and propagated among them the dangerous doctrine that their only masters were "God and the Emperor;" that the landlords had no right to any portion of the fruits of their toil; and that, on the contrary, their whole property belonged of right to themselves.* These doctrines, which were precisely the same

* A single passage from the innumerable pamphlets which at this period were circulated among the Gallician peasants, will show what was their tendency:—"Il faut obéir à l'Evangile. Or, que porte l'Evangile? 'Rendez à César ce qui est à César, et à Dieu ce qui est à Dieu.' Nous connaissons Dieu qui est au ciel, nous connaissons César qui est à Vienne. Il n'est pas question des Seigneurs dans l'Evangile, pas plus que des Propriétaires. Nous n'avons donc pour maîtres que Dieu et César. Nous ne devons rien aux Seigneurs: tout ce qui est à eux nous appartient."—REGNAULT, iii. 75.

CHAP. XLVI. 1845.

as those so much in vogue at that period in Great Britain and France, and which aimed at the extinction of the capitalist, who was deemed a dangerous and unnecessary middleman between the government and the workman, who ought to be abolished, speedily spread among the enthusiastic and illiterate peasants of Gallicia. The fuel for the flame was supplied by the Polish committees at Paris and Versailles, and the chief place from whence it was disseminated in Gallicia was the college of Zarnow. The principal instruments of excitement employed among the peasants were emissaries who went from village to village as the missionaries had formerly done in some parts of the West Indies, who inculcated the doctrine, that the *corvée* had been abolished by the Emperor seven years before, and was illegally kept up by the seigneurs, who refused to carry his paternal intentions into effect. Thus the Gallician insurrection acquires an importance in general history which would not otherwise have belonged to it; for it was the first practical application of the doctrines of the Socialists, then spreading secretly through every country of Europe, and destined ere long to overturn the French monarchy, and shake to its foundation every established government in the western world.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 75, 78; Ann. Hist. 1845, 289, 291—1846, 264, 267.

18. Injurious influence of the Jews.

Two peculiar circumstances existed in Gallicia, which aggravated in a most serious degree the dangers, already sufficiently great, arising from the spread of such dangerous doctrines among an ignorant and excitable peasantry. The first of these was the multitude of Jews who were there, as elsewhere in Poland, settled in the chief towns and villages, and who monopolised nearly every situation of profit or importance in them. The greater part of their emoluments were derived from the sale of spirits and other intoxicating liquors, to which the Poles, like all northern nations, were immoderately addicted. The proprietors and the priests had long endeavoured to check this propensity, which there, as elsewhere, consumed

nearly the whole substance of the working classes in debasing pleasures; and considerable success had attended their efforts. This was sufficient to set against them the whole body of the Jews, on the same principle as the publicans and spirit-dealers of Great Britain and Ireland were excited against Father Mathew and the advocates of the temperance movement in the British Islands. The Jews secretly inculcated the tenet, that the temperance movement was a deep-laid plan devised by the nobles and priests to enable them to enfeeble the peasants, and grind them to the dust, by depriving them of the liquors which sustained their strength, animated their spirit, and supported their courage. It may be readily conceived with what shouts of applause these doctrines were received in the cabarets and among the half-drunken circles of Gallicia.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 78, 79.

19. And disbanded soldiers.

The second circumstance which aggravated the hostile passions and increased the dangers of Gallicia, was the number of disbanded soldiers spread through the province, who were secretly retained as a sort of disguised police by the Government. As the troops for the public service were levied in Gallicia, as in Russia, not by ballot, but by a requisition of a certain number from each landlord, they were composed, for the most part, of the most restless and dangerous characters, whom it was deemed advisable to get quit of in this manner. Eight thousand of these unscrupulous persons had been disbanded in the end of 1845; but the Government, aware of the dangers which threatened the province, and secretly dreading both the nobles and the peasants, retained them in their pay, and authorised them to seize and hand over to the Austrian authorities any persons belonging to either party who might be the first to threaten the public tranquillity. Deeming the nobles the more formidable, and likely most to embarrass the Government, these agents inculcated on the peasants the belief that a general massacre of them was in contemplation, and to keep themselves well on

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

their guard against the first aggressive movement on the part of the landlords. Thus the conflict which was approaching in Gallicia was not between the Government and the people, but between the nobles and the peasantry, akin to the Jacquerie in France, the insurrection of the Boors in Germany, or the rebellion of Jack Cade in England.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. 1846, 374, 377; Regnault, iii. 77, 80.

20. Commencement of the insurrection of the nobles.

Under these circumstances, a collision at no distant period was inevitable; but the first blow was struck by the nobles. Driven to despair by the knowledge of an approaching Socialist insurrection among the peasants, they organised a *coup-de-main* against Zarnow, the chief place of the Communists, where they hoped to be joined by the whole artisans, mechanics, and bourgeois of the province. The means at their disposal, however, to effect this object, were miserably inadequate; the forces at their command were only two hundred, and the Austrian garrison of Zarnow was two thousand strong. The national party at Cracow strongly sympathised with these movements, and did their utmost to expand them into a general insurrection, extending over the whole of Old Poland, and which might terminate in the re-establishment of the national independence. Thus was the country at the same time threatened with a double insurrection, and yet so strangely were the leaders of the two movements ignorant of each other, that not only was there no concert, but there existed the most deadly enmity between them. The nobles and superior classes were not more exasperated against the Austrian Government, which had so long evaded their petitions, and refused to redress their grievances, than the peasantry were against the nobles, by whom they had been led to believe the prodigal gifts of the Emperor to them had been intercepted or concealed. Both parties were prepared to take up arms; but the two classes of insurgents were not prepared to fight in common against the Government, but to massacre each other![2] A strange and portentous state of things,

[2] Regnault, iii. 79, 81; Hist. of Europe, c. xxxvi. § 10.

but not unusual among a people just emerging from the fetters of slavery, and of which an example had previously occurred in the commencement of the terrible insurrection in St Domingo fifty years before.

21. Commencement of the insurrection. Feb. 19 and 20, 1846.

The *seignorial* insurgents appointed their rendezvous at the village of Lysagora, three leagues from Zarnow, where one hundred of them met on the night of the 19th February. The cold was excessive, the ground covered with snow, and the conspirators, who, for the most part, arrived in sledges, were already almost frozen to death when they arrived, with their arms falling from their hands, at the place of rendezvous. But the Government authorities were aware of what was going on, and at daybreak on the following morning the little band was surrounded by a greatly superior force, composed of Austrian soldiers and armed peasants. The conspirators, ignorant of the intentions of the band by whom they were surrounded, laid down their arms, calling upon their comrades to fraternise with them; but no sooner had they done so than the peasants threw themselves upon them, bound them hand and foot, and thrust them into a cellar, from whence they were conveyed in waggons to Zarnow. Hearing of this disaster, another band of conspirators near Ulikow threw away their arms, and dispersed; but they were pursued with unrelenting fury by the peasants, by whom the greater part were tracked out and cut down. These events, inconsiderable in themselves, became the source from which calamities unnumbered ensued to the whole province. Everywhere, when the news was received, which it generally was with great exaggeration, the peasants flew to arms, and commenced an attack on the chateaus of the seigneurs in their vicinity. By a refinement in cruelty which indicated too clearly the infernal agency at work among them, the peasants of each estate were directed, not against the château of their own landlord, but against that of the neighbouring one, in order that no lingering feelings of humanity might

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

interfere with the work of destruction. Under such direction, it proceeded with a rapidity, and terminated in a completeness, which might satisfy the most demoniacal spirit. Everywhere the landlords were hunted out and massacred, with their sons, servants, and domestics; and though the women and children were in general spared, the chateaus were committed to the flames. Unknown agents everywhere presented themselves, and said, "A few leagues hence they are massacring your brethren." These words were implicitly believed, and followed by a general insurrection and march against some neighbouring chateau, where the work of conflagration and massacre was soon complete.[1]

[1] Moniteur, March 6, 1846; Ann. Hist. 1846, 312, 314; Regnault, iii. 83, 85.

22. Horrors of the insurrection.

Volumes would barely suffice to recount the varied horrors of this disastrous insurrection, where the worst passions of human nature were brought to the aid of the infernal work of destruction. The cry was everywhere heard, "We are allowed three days of liberty and pillage;" and soon it was so generally acted upon, that the whole country resembled a town taken by assault. A few tragic examples will show the terrible nature of the revolt. Rotarski, landlord of Olasna, had been distinguished for a life of beneficence, which had deservedly won for him the title of King of the Peasants. Seized by the peasants, he asked to be allowed to confess as he was taken past a church. "Go on—there is no God!" cried the tigers who surrounded him. The curé of the church was brought out, and put beside him on the cart, and both were beaten with clubs till the noble expired. Hodorynski had been concealed by his wife in a strong box, but being discovered, she supplicated them, in the name of Heaven, to convey him to a place of safety. They feigned to comply, and, putting him in a cart, harnessed the wife in it instead of the horse, saying, "Since you will have him in a place of safety, drag him yourself." She strove to do so, and dropped down of fatigue, while her unhappy husband was beat to death by her side with

clubs. The fate of Brosinwski was still more frightful. They cut off his nose, tongue, and ears, scooped out his eyes, and cut off all his fingers, before he died. His wife was obliged to witness the atrocious spectacle. The house-steward had his head scalped, as by American savages, before death put a period to his sufferings. Fourteen persons perished in this manner at Zgorskha, twenty-three at Zarnow. At Niedzwiadka a whole marriage-party, including the bride and bridegroom, were massacred together in the church where the ceremony was commencing; in the chateau of M. Bzoski, where a funeral-party was assembling, all the persons as they arrived were slain, and interred in the same grave with the original deceased. The peasants bore the heads of their victims about with them, and received ten florins (£1) for each from the local authorities. Such were the features which Socialism assumed at its first rise in the European family. To the disgrace of the Austrian Government, some of the leaders, stained with the worst of these atrocities, in particular Jacques Szela, were publicly rewarded for their conduct in the insurrection after its suppression.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. 1846, 317, 324; Regnault, iii. 84, 87, 91.

23. Disturbances at Cracow, and its abandonment by the Austrians.

During these horrors the effervescence in Cracow reached its climax. That free town had long been the centre in which a general Polish insurrection was organised, and from which the revolutionary emissaries were despatched in every direction throughout Lithuania and Poland. The original movement, which terminated so disastrously in Gallicia, was concerted with the leaders of the committee there, who had been formally installed in power by the committees in all parts of Poland on the 24th January, and the insurrection was definitively fixed for the 24th February. These preparations, and the general effervescence which prevailed, did not escape the notice of the consuls of the three powers resident in Cracow, and so early as the 16th February they formally demanded of the Senate whether they could guarantee the public tranquillity. They replied that they could do so from all

Feb. 16.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

internal dangers, but not from such as came from without; and that if danger threatened from that quarter, they abandoned themselves to the prudence of the three residents. Upon this a body of Austrian troops, under General Collin, marched towards the town, and entered it on the Feb. 18. 18th. The conspirators were surprised by this sudden inroad, which took place before the day fixed for the insurrection, and made very little resistance. Two days afterwards, however, a serious attack was made on the Feb. 20. Imperialists by a body of insurgents who came from without, in which the Poles were unsuccessful. But the accounts received next day of the progress of the insurrection in Gallicia, and its ramifications in every part of Poland, and the magnitude of the forces which were accumulating round Cracow, were so formidable that Collin deemed his position untenable, and two days afterwards evacuated the place, taking with him the officers of Government, Senate, urban militia, and police, and made a precipitate retreat towards Gallicia, abandoning the whole state of Cracow to the insurgents, by whom a provisional government was immediately appointed as for the whole of Poland.[1]* The first step of the new authorities was to publish a manifesto, in which, after stating that "all Poland was up in arms," it was declared

Feb. 22.

[1] Ann. Hist. 1846, 321, 329; Regnault, iii. 92, 94; Procès Verbal, Fevrier 22, 1846; Ibid., iii. 450.

* "Procès-verbal rédigé le 22 Février à 8 heures du soir par les soussignés, pour l'établissement du Gouvernement National de la République Polonaise.

"Quatorze années d'efforts des braves enfants de la Patrie, pour parvenir à lui rendre son existence nationale, ont créé dans toutes les parties de la Pologne opprimée de nombreuses Associations, dont les membres s'exposent aux plus terribles dangers. Mais malgré cela, on est parvenu à diriger tous les efforts vers le même but, celui de recouvrer une Patrie en rendant la libérté *à toute la Nation Polonaise.* Le 24 Janvier de cette année, des comités de toutes les associations de la Pologne remirent le Pouvoir gouvernemental entre les mains d'une autorité composée de cinq personnes, qui furent, avec adjonction d'un secrétaire, choisies dans le Grand-Duché de Posen, la ville libre de Cracovie et son territoire dans la Russie, et parmi l'Emigration, laquelle devait se compléter ensuite par l'élection de deux membres, l'un pour la Pologne réunie, l'autre pour la Lithuanie. . . . . Et tandis que nous admettons au sein du Gouvernement un citoyen de la Pologne réunie qui accepte les Pouvoirs à lui déférés, nous nous tendons mutuellement la main, et jurons à la face de Dieu et de la Nation Polonaise, *que nous exercerons les Pouvoirs Révolutionnaires* jusqu'à ce que toute la Pologne soit affran-

that the order of nobility was abolished, *all property was to be divided* among the peasants occupying it, and the slightest resistance to the revolutionary authorities was punished with instant death.

24. Recapture of Cracow.

Even if the insurrection had ever had any chances of success, they were utterly destroyed by this violent and ill-judged proclamation. Every one saw that a democratic despotism was about to arise, endangering life, destructive to property, and fatal to all the ends of the social union. The insurgents increased considerably in strength, and in a few days 2500 bold and ardent spirits were concentrated in Cracow, chiefly from the neighbouring provinces. But the end was approaching. The alarm had now spread to all the partitioning powers, and orders were given to the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian forces to advance against the city. All was soon accomplished. The Austrian general, Collin, stopped his retreat, and retook Wieluzka and Podgorze, which he had evacuated in the first alarm consequent on the insurrection, while large bodies of Prussian and Austrian troops also advanced against the insurgents. Resistance in such circumstances was hopeless; and in the night of the 2d of March the insurgents, still 2500 strong, evacuated the town,[1] and the whole soon after capitulated to the Prus-

March 2 and 3.

[1] Ann. Hist. 1846, 361, 364; Regnault, iii. 92, 95; Proclamation du l'Empereur d'Autriche, Nov. 13, 1846; Ibid., 456.

chie; que nous regardons comme un moyen propre à arriver à ce but un mouvement produit parmi toute la population, *par l'abolition de tous les priviléges*, et la concession de *la faculté illimitée de posséder les terrains qu'elle exploite*, faculté dont les paysans ne jouissent aujourd'hui que sous certaines conditions. . . . . Les membres choisies et le secrétaire ont accepté les pouvoirs qui leur étaient déférés, et devaient se trouver avant le 24 Février (*jour fixé pour l'explosion de l'Insurrection*) à Cracovie. Les membres pour Cracovie et son territoire, pour la Gallicie et l'Emigration, s'y trouvèrent effectivement avant le terme fixé, tandis que le Représentant du Grand-Duché de Posen fut arrêté, et que celui de Russie ainsi que le Secrétaire n'étaient pas encore arrivés. Le membre de l'Emigration ayant, à l'arrivée des troupes Autrichiennes à Cracovie, conçu des craintes pour sa liberté, s'était tout-à-coup enfui au-delà des frontières. Ces évènemens imposent aux membres du Pouvoir gouvernemental, qui ne sont pas encore arrivés, le devoir sacré de venir se charger sans délai, et avec d'autant plus d'empressement, des pouvoirs qui leur ont été déférés, que le zèle le plus ardent se refroiderait, et que les propriétaires nos frères, qui pourraient frapper les coups les plus vigoureux, n'oseraient pas prendre part à l'insurrection."—Regnault, iii. 450, 451.

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

sians. Meanwhile a Russian battalion and some Cossacks penetrated into Cracow, which was immediately declared in a state of siege, and next day jointly occupied by the forces of the three partitioning powers.

25. Reflections on the annexation of Cracow.

This event led to an important change in the east of Europe, attended by lasting consequences on the balance of power and future destinies of the Sarmatian population. After a long deliberation, it was resolved to repeal the treaties of 21st April 1815, which established the Republic of Cracow, and to restore it to the Austrian Government, from whose dominions it had been originally taken.

Nov. 16, 1846.

This was accordingly done by the treaty 16th November 1846, which, after narrating the repeated conspiracies of which the republic of Cracow had been the theatre, and the open insurrection and attempt to revolutionise Poland which had just been organised in its bosom, declared the existence of the republic terminated, and itself, with its whole territory, restored to Austria, as it stood before 1809. Thus was the last relic of Polish nationality finally extinguished.[1]

[1] Ordonnance, Nov. 16, 1846; Martin's Sup.

26. Great sensation produced by these events in Europe.

These events, as might easily have been anticipated, produced a very great sensation over Europe. Ancient feelings were revived; old wounds bled afresh. The cause of Polish nationality had been so long associated in every part of Europe with generous sentiments and heroic efforts, that the last act of the mournful drama reawakened all the heart-rending emotions with which its progress had been attended. In Great Britain and France these feelings were in an especial manner warm and general; and the debates on the subject in the legislatures of both countries were warm and frequent, and such as revealed the extent to which the general mind had been stirred. It does not appear to be necessary, however, to give an abstract of these debates, because the question lies in a very narrow compass, and the official instruments published by the provisional govern-

ment at Cracow, on the 22d February 1846, put the case in the clearest point of view. It is there admitted that a general insurrection of all Poland, including Lithuania, had been organised in the different provinces, a provisional government appointed at Cracow to direct and superintend the movement, and that the outbreak was to take place on the 22d February. The Austrians received intelligence of the design, and anticipated it by entering that city on the 20th, and permanently occupying it in conjunction with the Prussian and Russian forces on the 2d March.

27. Justification of the annexation which this conduct of the Cracow insurgents afforded.

These facts put an end to the case, and blew to the winds the whole eloquent declamation on the subject in the British House of Commons and French Chamber of Deputies. It is clear the allies were throughout acting on the defensive: their occupation of Cracow was a measure dictated by the duty of self-preservation, and which no government similarly situated could, consistently with its obligations to its subjects, neglect. True, Cracow was an independent State; but it was a State which had permitted a vast conspiracy, having for its object the entire restoration of Poland, and its resumption from the present occupants, to be matured in its bosom; and the Austrian invasion of its territory did not take place till within two days of the time when the general insurrection was to have broken out. Having thus drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard, the inhabitants had no reason to complain, if, being vanquished, they underwent the usual fate of war; and the entire tranquillity of Poland since the annexation of Cracow to the Austrian dominions, proves of how much importance it was to its material interests that the nursery of discontent and revolutionary propagandism which that little republic afforded, should be prevented from any longer disturbing the tranquillity of the east of Europe. The real reproach against the Austrian Government in this trans-

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

action is neither the invasion of Cracow nor its incorporation with the Imperial dominions, but the manner in which it allowed its agents to rouse the passions of the peasantry, and the atrocious deeds of cruelty by which the suppression of the insurrection was disgraced.

28. Embarrassment of M. Guizot and Lord Palmerston on the Polish question.

The Governments both of France and England were much embarrassed with the Polish question, when interrogated on the subject in Parliament. In answer to an eloquent speech of M. de Montalembert, in the Chamber of Deputies, on the subject, M. Guizot observed: "I am not called upon either to defend or condemn the acts of a foreign government. We are, and always shall be, ready to discuss our own affairs, our own acts, in reference to our connection with foreign countries; but we are under no similar obligation in regard to the internal affairs, the domestic acts, of these governments themselves. I should not know how to do so; I am not bound to do so. I only ask that you will draw no conclusion one way or other from my silence in this particular. It is no part of my duty either to admit or deny what M. de Montalembert has advanced on the subject. The discussion, the judgment concerning it, is going on before the whole of Europe. It is there that public opinion is to pronounce finally upon it. It is not in France, or at this tribune, that anything of the kind can be done."[1] The answer of Lord Palmerston to similar questions in the British House of Commons was in substance the same, though a stronger leaning to an intervention in favour of Poland was apparent in his expressions.* There can be no doubt that the declinature to interfere thus expressed by the Ministers of the two Western Powers,

[1] Moniteur, July 3, 1846.

* "The general treaty," said Lord Palmerston, "to which England and France are parties, does contain a stipulation with regard to the freedom of the city of Cracow; and this was arranged in the conferences to which England was a party, and at a period anterior to the conclusion of the separate treaty to carry out these arrangements. It is perfectly plain, therefore, that the arrangement as to Cracow was founded upon stipulations to which Great Britain was a party, and that the violation of that treaty is a violation of the arrange-

was founded in wisdom and justified by necessity; for neither the one nor the other could reach Poland, even if the ground for intervention had been much stronger than it really was. The Germanic Confederation, with its 300,000 armed men, backed by Russia with as many more, lay between. But it affords a striking proof of the ascendant which Liberal principles had now attained in Europe, and the extent to which they had shut out the light of reason, that neither the one government nor the other ventured, in their own defence, to state the real truth, which was, that the occupation of Cracow, and its incorporation with Austria, was a measure of self-defence fully justified by the attempts made in that republic to wrest all the provinces of Old Poland from the partitioning powers, and re-establish the ancient monarchy. The Poles were perfectly entitled to make such attempts, for their partition had been a scandalous act of injustice; the Austrians were as clearly entitled to resist them. But it may readily be conceived what a handle the declinature of France to interfere on such a question afforded to the Liberal orators and journals, and how largely it tended to aid their fixed policy of discrediting the Government.

29. Renewed attempt to assassinate Louis Philippe. April 16.

The effect of the excitement produced by the events in Poland, appeared, as was too often the case in France at this time, in a fresh attempt upon the life of the sovereign. On the 16th of April, as Louis Philippe was returning from a hunt in the forest of Fontainebleau, seated in an open carriage, accompanied by M. de Montalivet, with the Queen and princesses in similar conveyances behind him, as he was entering the great park near the walls of

ments to which Great Britain was one of the contracting parties. The ground which I take, therefore, is, not that it is not for this House to take into consideration the question of our foreign relations, but that, if the House should take such a resolution as is proposed on a question of such grave importance as the conduct of foreign powers, it is not fitting that such a resolution should pass without following up the resolution by further proceedings. I shall therefore move the previous question on the first resolution."—*Parl. Deb.*, xci. 94, 95.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

the enclosures of Avon, two reports of firearms were suddenly heard from the top of the wall. No one was struck, but the wadding of one of the fusils fell still burning between the King and M. de Montalivet. The assassin was immediately seized by some of the foresters, and proved to be a man of the name of Lecomte, who had formerly been in the royal service as an officer in the forests, and even considerably promoted, but had been deprived of his situation in consequence of a serious delinquence. On being seized, he said only, "I was in too great a hurry." It was fortunate he was so, for he was known to have been so expert a marksman that he scarcely ever missed a fawn at 150 paces distant. He admitted that he intended to have killed the King, and had come to Fontainebleau for that purpose. There was no evidence to connect him with any of the secret societies, and his offence seems to have arisen from an exaggerated idea of private wrong, coupled with the excitement produced by the political declamation of the period. He was found guilty, and underwent the extreme sentence of the law with unshaken resolution.[1]

[1] Moniteur, April 17, 1846; Ann. Hist. 1846; Chron., April 16; Regnault, iii. 105, 106.

30. Escape of Louis Napoleon from the Château of Ham. May 25.

Shortly after this infamous attempt, and when the trial of Lecomte was going on, an event occurred fraught with the most important results in future times, and which, in a manner, links together the story of Louis Philippe with that of the Republic and Empire which succeeded his dethronement. This was the ESCAPE OF LOUIS NAPOLEON FROM THE CHATEAU OF HAM, which took place on the 25th May, at mid-day. During his prolonged captivity in this gloomy abode, where he had occupied the apartments formerly tenanted by Prince Polignac, the young Prince had been constantly occupied with grave and serious pursuits; and he had during this period, in an especial manner, made himself master of the general domestic policy and pacific designs of his uncle, the great Napoleon. This appears in the clearest manner from the very remarkable work *Les Idées Napoléoniennes*, composed by the Prince

to beguile the weary hours of his captivity, which had now continued above five years. During this period his chief correspondence and intercourse was with the French Liberals and extreme democrats; and on more than one occasion he expressed himself in the most unequivocal manner an uncompromising adherent of their principles.* He had been engaged, in the spring of 1846, in a negotiation with the French Government for liberty to leave Ham on his parole to visit his aged father, who was dangerously ill. The Cabinet of the Tuileries were not disinclined to make the concession; but they attached such conditions to the favour that the Prince refused to subscribe to them, and preferred the chance of making his escape an unfettered agent.[1] This was a very difficult task, for the citadel of

[1] Regnault, iii. 106, 107; Moniteur, May 27, 1846; Ann. Hist. May 25, 1846; Chron.

* "Enfant de la Révolution, héritier de l'homme qui ne me semble grand que parcequ'il a tout fait pour le triomphe la Révolution, je ne connais d'autres principes que la souveraineté du Peuple, d'autre but que de s'efforcer à organiser la démocratie, et à améliorer le sort des classes pauvres, tout en relevant notre drapeau vis-à-vis de l'étranger."—LOUIS NAPOLEON *à* M. ——, 22 *Août*, 1843.

"Elévé dans des sentiments démocratiques dès que j'eus atteint l'âge où l'on réfléchit, j'admirai le chef de ma famille, non-seulement comme grand capitaine, mais surtout comme le représentant glorieux de la Révolution Française. Je ne vis alors que deux causes distinctes en Europe: celle qui avait vaincu le 14 Juillet 1789, et celle qui avait triomphé le 18 Juin 1815. Toutes les divisions intermédiaires me parurent des divisions puériles, alimentées souvent par des intérêts personnels.

"Aujourd'hui la question est la même pour moi. Je ne vois en France que des vaincus et des vainqueurs à Waterloo. Les vainqueurs ont le pouvoir, ils avilissent et oppriment notre pays. Les vaincus souffrent et gémissent. Quels que soient les noms que ceux-ci se donnent, et le lieu qu'ils habitent, ils sont tous les enfants d'une même mère, la Révolution. Si jamais la lutte recommence, ils se réuniront sous le même drapeau, par la même raison qui depuis des siècles a toujours réuni les hommes—l'opposition à un ennemi commun.

"Convaincu que le Gouvernement actuel faisait le malheur de la France, dans ce sens que la corruption et la lâcheté mettent une nation bien plus près de sa ruine que la tyrannie, je me suis résolu à tout entreprendre pour le renverser, bien décidé à laisser le peuple entier choisir la forme de gouvernement, qui lui conviendrait le mieux. Le rôle de libérateur suffit à mon ambition. *Je n'étais pas assez fou pour avoir la prétention de fonder une dynastie sur un sol jonché de tous les débris des dynasties passées.*"—LOUIS NAPOLEON *à* ——, Ham, March 9, 1844; REGNIER, i. 316, 317. So far did Louis Napoleon at this period carry his democratic principles, that he embraced and strenuously supported those of the Socialists, and wrote many articles in the journal *Du Progrès du Pas de Calais*, enforcing their views, which were afterwards collected in a pamphlet entitled *Extinction du Paupérisme*, ibid., i. 316.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

Ham is of great strength, and deemed so secure a place of confinement that it had been purposely selected as a state prison for the most important political offenders for a long period. Nevertheless Louis Napoleon succeeded in making his escape from it, and got clear out of France. It was effected in the following manner.

31. Mode in which he effected his escape. May 25.

Notwithstanding the length of his confinement, the vigilance and rigour with which Louis Napoleon was watched had undergone no diminution. Two sentinels were always stationed at the bottom of the stair leading to his apartment; its windows were strongly barred; at night the guards were doubled; and at all times the utmost precautions were taken to prevent approach to the fortress from the outside. Fortune, however, threw the means of escape within his reach, which, by the assistance of connivance within, was happily carried into execution. Some repairs required to be made on the stair; and during a quarter of an hour at noon, it was known that one of the sentinels on the stairs withdrew to read the papers, leaving the other alone on the post. It was this auspicious moment which was chosen to carry the escape into effect. The means of it were arranged with Dr Conneau, the medical attendant, and Charles Thelin, the valet of the Prince. Their period of imprisonment having expired, they were at liberty to go into the town, which they always did after obtaining leave from the governor of the prison. Advantage was taken of this facility to bring in by stealth various articles of dress, which might serve as a disguise in passing the sentries. The Prince then cut off his long mustaches, which made a great change in his appearance, put on a black wig, dyed his face and hands, and having equipped himself entirely in a workman's dress, with a blue smock-frock, he proceeded at noon with a plank on his shoulder to pass the guard. This was effected successfully, the sentinel either mistaking, or pretending to mistake him for one of the workmen. In passing him the Prince accidentally let the pipe fall which he was smoking. He

calmly stooped and picked it up, and the soldier, after looking at him for a moment, resumed his walk. Meanwhile Thelin very skilfully amused the workmen, from whom, even more than the guards, detection was to be apprehended, as it was one of their own number who was personated. As it was, he was narrowly scrutinised by two workmen, who expressed aloud their surprise at not knowing him, and soon after recognised by a favourite spaniel, which met him as he was going out. All seemed lost, for there was still a line of sentries to pass, when a friendly voice from behind exclaimed, "Ah! it is Berthon!" At the same time the Prince, as if fatigued with his burden, passed the plank from his right to his left shoulder, and got past without farther molestation. The last line of sentries was passed without discovery, and the Prince, having gained the open road, went on with his plank till the joyful sound of wheels was heard, and he leapt on the box of a cabriolet which the faithful Thelin had provided for him in St Quentin. He soon reached that place, still on the box driving, and got into the train for Valenciennes, which he reached a little after two in the afternoon, and soon after got to Brussels, from whence he crossed over to London. He was too late to see his father, who was already dead, but not too late to follow out his destiny, which led him from the prison of Ham to the throne of France.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 108, 110; Hist. de la Procedure du Prince Louis Napoleon, i. 42, 43.

32. Slight attention which this event excited. Marriage of the Duke de Bordeaux.

The world was far from appreciating at the time the ultimate importance of this escape of Louis Napoleon. It was regarded merely as the fortunate and adventurous escape of a young man from a state of captivity, attended with the interest which always attends such events. "As the escape," said the *National*, "*can never come to prejudice any one*, we congratulate those upon it whom it immediately concerns. As for ourselves, it is the species of success which we wish for, and which we would willingly procure for every kind of pretender." An important step was taken at the same time by another pre-

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

tender, with very different titles to the throne. The Duke de Bordeaux married the Archduchess Maria Theresa-Beatrice of Modena, eldest sister of the reigning duke of that principality. He was the only ruling prince in Europe who had refused to recognise Louis Philippe. There has been no issue as yet of the marriage; a circumstance which, by removing the rivalry of the elder and younger branches of the Bourbon family, may possibly come at some future time to have an important influence on the destinies of France. In the mean time it was a singular proof of the mutations of fortune that the direct descendant of Louis XIV. deemed himself fortunate upon being admitted into the family of a third-rate Italian potentate.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 112, 113; Ann. Hist. 1846, 274.

33. Last election under Louis Philippe.

Though Ministers had obtained a majority on the Polish question, and still kept their ascendant in the Chamber, their position was uneasy, and they felt the necessity of additional strength in the legislature to enable them to continue the policy of resistance upon which they had now staked the monarchy. They accordingly dissolved the Chamber by royal proclamation immediately after its prorogation; and the elections came on in the August following. The electoral contest is interesting, for it was THE LAST which occurred under the monarchy of Louis Philippe. The Liberal opposition, taught by experience, adopted the well-known English system of sinking all minor differences of opinion in a general coalition to keep out the ministerial candidate. M. Thiers addressed a long and able letter to his constituents, recapitulating all that had been done by the Government and the Opposition during the last ten years, and earnestly recommended to other candidates the same policy.* A

July 21.

* "Notre Gouvernement est non-seulement faible; il est vain. Il a voulu paraître quelque chose. Il a mis une singulière ostentation à renouer l'Alliance Anglaise, et il a signé l'extension du droit de visite. Il a voulu s'occuper de notre grandeur, et tandis qu'il laissait dépérir notre matériel naval, il a pris les Marquises. Les Marquises n'étant qu'une suité de rochers stériles où l'on ne peut vivre. Il a pris Taiti. Mais les Anglais ont désavoué cette occupation,

circular was addressed by MM. de Montalembert, Vatiménil, and Reancey, to the Catholic electors over the whole kingdom, enjoining the requisition from every candidate of a written pledge in lieu of all other promises, to insist upon the absolute liberty for which the Catholics contended in the matter of education. The utmost efforts were made by all parties to secure the return of their respective candidates; and although the Government sustained several notable defeats, yet, upon the whole, their position was improved, and the majority supporting M. Guizot was so considerable as to place him in a position of apparent security. On the first division, Aug. 19. which was usually the decisive one, for the presidency of the Chamber, the majority for the ministerial candidate was 120, the numbers being 218 to 98. The Throne of the Barricades seemed to be established beyond all dispute; and unquestionably it was so in the affections of the bourgeois class, which alone was represented in the legislature.[1] Yet out of this seeming security arose several circumstances, which at this period combined to

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 20, 1846; Regnault, iii. 139, 140; Ann. Hist. 1846, 276.

et il a désavoué l'Admiral Dupetit-Thouars qui avait pris Taiti. Un Missionnaire, M. Pritchard, ayant notamment excité les habitans de Taiti à égorger nos soldats, l'un de nos officiers l'avait consigné pour un moment à bord de nos vaisseaux; il a fallu, pour ne pas engager la guerre, payer une indemnité à ce Missionnaire. Enfin, engagé dans une suite de mauvaises affaires avec l'Angleterre, dont on prétendait renouer l'alliance, on a voulu faire quelque chose pour améliorer les rapports avec elle, et dans la Question de Texas, où nous n'avons pas un intérêt appréciable, on s'est prononcé pour l'Angleterre contre l'Amérique.

"Passons à l'Intérieur; les soutiens par Excellence de la Paix qui, par leurs ridicules conquêtes de l'océanie, nous ont conduits si près de la guerre, dans l'affaire du récensement nous ont valu le seul trouble sérieux qui ait eu lieu depuis six ans, trouble ensanglanté, sans que la force restât au Gouvernement. Voici qui est encore moins pardonable, à mon avis, car cela tend à détruire tout Gouvernement; c'est de conférer sans mesure, sans aucune retenue, toutes les fonctions publiques dans un but exclusivement politique, c'est de se prêter ainsi aux vices du régime électif, et de les accroitre en les surexcitant. Aujourd'hui que *les passions sont éteintes*, que les appétits ont remplacé les passions, je demande à tout homme de bonne foi de regarder autour de lui, et de dire ce qu'il lui semble. Pour moi, je suis convaincu que si l'on n'y prend garde, il n'y aura bientôt plus d'administration. Quelques meneurs dans les Collèges Electoraux ou dans les Chambres, feront la loi au Gouvernement."—M. THIERS *aux Electeurs de Aix*, July 21, 1846; REGNIER, iii. 115, 134.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

endanger its foundations, and at length brought about its fall. The first of these was the SPANISH MARRIAGES.

34. The Spanish Marriages. History of the question.

To understand this important subject it must be premised, that by the old law of Spain, as of most other countries in Europe, females as well as males might succeed to the crown of the monarchy, which in fact was first consolidated by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, which united on one head the two rival crowns of Castile and Aragon. The bequest of the Spanish crown, however, to the Duke of Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV., in 1700, first awakened Europe to a sense of the immense danger which would threaten the independence of Europe if the crowns of France and Spain were to be united in the same sovereign; and the War of the Succession was undertaken and prosecuted for twelve years to prevent it. The victories of Marlborough and Eugene averted the danger at that time, and it was fondly hoped that, by the Treaty of Utrecht, it had been permanently guarded against. By that treaty the title of the Duke of Anjou to the Spanish crown was recognised, but on condition only that he renounced for himself and his descendants all claim to the French crown; while, on the other hand, the French monarch was to renounce for himself and his descendants all claim to the Spanish crown, which was to descend to certain specified princes of the *male* line, always excluding him who was possessed of the French throne. The Duke of Saxony and his male heirs were called to the succession, failing Philip V., the existing sovereign, and his *male* heirs. This act of renunciation of the crown of Spain, and its entail on male heirs, was solemnly ratified by the Cortes of Castile and Aragon, and by the Parliament of Paris, and it became part of the public law of Europe by the 6th article of the Treaty of Utrecht.[1]

1 Dumont, Corp. Dip. viii. 1, 339; Schoell, Hist. des Traités, ii. 99, 105.

Experience has now abundantly proved both the formidable nature of the danger which was meant to be

guarded against by this introduction of the Salic law into the succession of the Spanish crown, and the wisdom of the provision to prevent it that it should be limited to heirs-*male*. It was even then foreseen, what has often since occurred, that if the maritime forces of France and Spain were united, they would considerably outnumber those of England, and that we might be blockaded in our harbours by the combined fleets of the two powers. This, accordingly, actually happened in 1784, when the French and Spanish fleets, numbering forty-seven sail of the line, blockaded Admiral Danby in Plymouth, who had only twenty-one; and the same disparity existed, and similar results would probably have ensued, in 1805, had not Napoleon's admirably-conceived plan for our subjugation been defeated only by the steady gallantry of Sir R. Calder and the heroic energy of Nelson. In every one of the wars between France and England for the last century, Spain has in the end taken part against this country, and in every one the fleets of England have been outnumbered by her two opponents. Nor was it less obvious that if the Spanish crown were permitted to descend to females, not only would there be a constant jealousy between France and England as to the disposal of the hand of the heiress to so magnificent an inheritance, but there was the greatest possible danger that the French competitor would, from proximity of situation and superior military force in his country, prove successful, and the whole naval and military strength of the two monarchies be ranged, on occasion of the first serious rupture, against the independence of this country.

35. Danger to England from the French and Spanish alliance.

It is one of the most singular facts recorded in history, that after having secured the separation of France and Spain, so far as succession goes, by the victories of Marlborough, and prevented their reunion by the power of conquest—by those of Wellington—the Government of Great Britain should have made its election voluntarily to forego those advantages, and incur the risk consequent

36. Repeal of the Salic law, and opening of the Spanish throne to queens.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

on their loss, and that for no national object or public advantage whatever. So it was, however: the thing was done, and cannot now be undone: and it rests with those who brought it about to explain its reasons and make apparent its necessity. The French Revolution had caused a division of political feeling in Spain, as elsewhere in Europe, and the democratic party reduced the Sovereign to such straits that he only recovered his freedom by the armed intervention of France in 1823, as already recorded. Subsequent to this the old King married a second time, and by his new queen, Christina, he had two daughters, but no son. The old monarch, like most other men who, in advanced years, adventure upon the hazardous step of a marriage with a young wife, fell under the government of the Queen, to whom it was a natural object of ambition to see her own family on the throne instead of Don Carlos, the King's younger brother, and the nearest male heir. This could only be done by altering the order of succession established by the Treaty of Utrecht, and the consent of the estates of the realm; but the divided state of opinion in the country, in consequence of the revolutionary passions of which it had been the victim, suggested the idea that this might be effected, and by the support of the Liberal party A QUEEN, the King's eldest daughter, put on the throne. This was accordingly done: a deed purporting to be an alteration of the order of succession in 1787, and restoring the old law of descent, which admitted females to the throne, was produced, and Ferdinand VII. left his throne to his eldest daughter, the present reigning Sovereign. A terrible civil war, as might have been expected, ensued between the Conservatives, headed by Don Carlos, and the Revolutionists who espoused the cause of the Queen; but the latter was recognised by both France and England, who formed the famous *Quadruple Alliance*, in 1834, to secure her on the throne. By their countenance and the armed intervention of the two powers, the contest was at length decided

in favour of the Queen, who is still in possession of the throne. The narrative of this struggle will form the interesting subject of a future chapter.

37. Effects of this change on the interests of England.

The conflict in the Peninsula having come to an end, it remained to be seen what fruit France or England were to derive from it, and what advantage the latter was to obtain from having violated the Treaty of Utrecht, purchased with so much blood and treasure, and *substituted a queen for a king* on the Spanish throne. That France, which had four young princes of attractive person and agreeable manners to marry, should desire to see a rule of succession established beyond the Pyrenees, which called two young Spanish princesses to the throne, was very conceivable; but what interest England had in throwing Spanish princesses, heiresses to the throne, into the arms of French princes, was not so apparent. The result has completely proved the magnitude of the fault in policy, as great as the breach of national faith, committed by this violation on the part of Great Britain of the Treaty of Utrecht, and departure from the fixed policy of above a hundred years. Spain has been now, for nearly a quarter of a century, under the government of a revolutionary Queen, directed by a Liberal cabinet; but it would be difficult to point out one single advantage which has accrued directly or indirectly to this country from the change in the succession. On the other hand, the jealousies between France and England, which soon arose in connection with the Spanish princesses, completely destroyed the good understanding between them, which was so essential to the peace of Europe, and, by depriving Louis Philippe of the moral support of Great Britain, powerfully contributed to his fall.

Queen Christina, then Regent of Spain, feeling herself entirely dependent on the Liberal party for the preservation of her daughter's throne, and being well aware that it was in France alone that she could find the prompt military assistance requisite to suppoft her against the

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

Carlists, who formed a great majority of the Spanish population, naturally bethought herself of the favourable opportunity presented by the marriageable condition of the princes of the one country, and the princesses of the other, to cement their union by matrimonial alliances. With this view, although the princesses, her daughters, were as yet too young for marriage, she made formal proposals before 1840 to Louis Philippe for a double marriage, one between the Duke d'Aumale, the King's third son, and Queen Isabella, her eldest daughter, and another between the Duke of Montpensier, his fourth son, and the Infanta Louisa Fernanda, her second daughter.[1]

38. Queen Christina's proposal of a double marriage to Louis Philippe.

[1] Regnault, iii. 148, 149.

How agreeable soever these proposals were to Louis Philippe, who desired nothing so much as to see his descendants admitted into the family of European Sovereigns, he was too sagacious not to perceive that the hazard with which they were attended more than counterbalanced the advantages. It was evident that such a marriage of the Duke d'Aumale with the Queen of Spain would at once dissolve the *entente cordiale* with Great Britain, on which the stability of his throne so much depended; for however much the Liberal Government of England might desire to see constitutional monarchies established in the Peninsula, it was not to be expected it would like to see the crown of Spain placed on the head of a French prince. It was already surmised, too, that the Cabinet of London had views of its own for the hand of the younger princess. He therefore returned a courteous answer, declining the hand of the Queen for the Duke d'Aumale, but expressing the satisfaction it would afford him to see the Duke of Montpensier united to the Infanta.[2]

39. Which are declined by Louis Philippe.

[2] Regnault, iii. 148, 149; D'Haussonville, Politique Exterieur de la France, ii. 146, 147.

The next occasion on which the subject of the Spanish marriages was brought forward, was when Queen Christina took refuge in Paris, during one of the numerous convulsions to which Spain has been subject since the attempt was made to introduce democratic institutions

40. Farther conferences on the subject. 1841.

among its inhabitants. Louis Philippe then declared to the exiled Queen-Regent, that the most suitable spouse for her daughter the Queen would be found in one of the descendants in the male line of Philip V., king of Spain, the sovereign on the throne when the Treaty of Utrecht was signed. The object of this proposal was indirectly to exclude the pretensions of Prince Coburg, cousin-german of Prince Albert, whom rumour had assigned as one of the suitors for the hand of the young Queen, and at the same time avoid exciting the jealousy of the British Government, by openly courting the alliance for a French prince. The descendants in the male line of Philip V. were, the three sons of Don Carlos, the younger brother of the late king; two sons of Don François de Paule; two princes of Naples, brothers of Queen Christina; and the Prince of Lima. The three first were excluded by the hostility of their father, the conservative pretender to the throne, to the reigning Sovereign, the last by reason of his being already married. Thus the circle of suitors in that line was restricted to the princes of the house of Naples and the two sons of Don François de Paule. A proposal for a marriage of the queen with one of these princes was transmitted by the Court of France to the Cabinets of London, Vienna, and Berlin; but the ministers of these courts felt too strongly the delicacy and dangers of the question to sanction such an arrangement, and the matter remained undecided, which was of the less moment, that the Queen had not yet arrived at a marriageable age. Sir R. Peel and Lord Aberdeen, on the part of Great Britain, merely insisted that, Spain being an independent power, the choice of a husband for its Queen should be left to its own Government, aided by the advice of the constitutional estates of the realm.[1] They never advanced, as long as they remained in power, directly or indirectly, any proposal in favour of Prince Coburg or any other candidate, but contented themselves with contending for freedom

[1] Regnault, iii. 149, 150; Guizot, Vie de Peel, 308, 309.

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

of choice on the part of the Spanish Government and people.*

41. Conferences at the Château d'Eu, and at Windsor, on the subject. Sept. 1842. April 1843.

Matters were in this situation, with the question still open, so far as diplomatic intercourse was concerned, but the views and interests of the two Cabinets were well understood by the Ministers on both sides, when Queen Victoria, in the autumn of 1842, paid a visit to the French monarch at the Château d'Eu, in Normandy, which was followed next spring by a similar act of courtesy on the part of Louis Philippe to the Queen of England in the princely halls of Windsor. This visit by Queen Victoria was extremely gratifying to the French monarch, who exhausted all the resources of wealth, luxury, and refinement in the fêtes and amusements intended to testify his satisfaction to the English Sovereign. Amidst these scenes of more than royal magnificence, and when walking under the shade of the lofty elms contemporary with Henry IV. at the Château d'Eu, the graver concerns of

* "As to the Spanish marriages," said Sir R. Peel, in January 1847, "I shall content myself with making one observation, that the last Cabinet, as long as they were in power, never made any attempt to obtain for a prince of the House of Saxe-Coburg the hand of the Queen of Spain."—Sir R. PEEL, Jan. 19, 1847; *Parl. Deb.* lxxxiv. 158.—Lord John Russell said: "This I fully determined on, that, agreeing to the line laid down by the former Government, the present Government should state that it had no wish to present an English candidate; and with respect to one prince in particular, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, the Government of this country never entertained for a moment a wish to put him forward, or support any pretensions he might entertain with respect to the throne of Spain; and I must say, that in any advice which I felt it my duty to offer to the Sovereign upon the subject, I found the greatest readiness and willingness to sanction this view; for her Majesty never wished that Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg should become a candidate for the hand of the Queen of Spain, supported by England. I state this, because I know it has been industriously set about that this is in reality a dispute between the royal families of France and of this country, in consequence of the course taken by the royal family of France with respect to the throne of Madrid, and of a counter attempt of ours to place one of its members on that throne. As far as we have been concerned, and so far as I know with regard to the late Government, there was no foundation whatever for such a statement. I do not know what Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg would have said if a proposition on the subject had been made to him by the Government of Spain; but I have been told he would not have been likely to entertain it. We made up our minds not to propose to Spain a candidate for the Queen's hand, or to make ourselves in any way concerned with the internal government of the country."—*Parl. Deb.* lxxxix. 146.

state policy were not forgotten. It was evident on both sides that the views and interests of the two courts and nations were so much at variance, that a compromise was the only way of solving the difficulty. To effect this was no easy matter, as the anxiety of the French monarch for the Spanish alliance was known to all, and it was equally certain that the English Cabinet would strenuously oppose any arrangement which promised to bring the resources of Spain practically under the direction of the Sovereign of France. Fortunately the pacific inclinations of the two Sovereigns was aided by the wisdom and moderation of the Ministers on both sides; and under the direction of Lord Aberdeen and M. Guizot a compromise was agreed on of the most fair and equitable kind. It was stipulated that the King of France should renounce all pretensions, on the part of *any* of his sons, to the hand of the Queen of Spain; and on the other hand, that the royal heiress should make her selection among the princes descendants of Philip V., which excluded the dreaded competition of a prince of the house of Coburg. And in regard to the marriage of the Duke de Montpensier with the Infanta Donna Fernanda, Louis Philippe positively engaged that it should not take place *till the Queen was married, and had had* CHILDREN (*des enfans.*) On this condition the Queen of England consented to waive all objections to the marriage when these events had taken place; and it was understood that this consent on both sides was to be dependent on the hand of the Queen being bestowed on a descendant of Philip V., and no other competitor.[1]* Lord Aberdeen's words were

[1] Regnault, iii. 151, 152; Guizot, Vie de Peel, 309; M. Guizot à M. le Comte St Aulaire, March 13, 1843.—Ibid., 310, note.

* The testimony of the statesmen engaged in this affair on *both* sides, is decisive on this point: "La sollicitude du roi Louis Philippe," says M. Guizot, "à cet égard (l'Alliance Anglaise) était encore plus vive que la mienne. Je le répète aujourd'hui sans la moindre hésitation, comme sans le moindre intérêt: jamais la politique d'entente cordiale entre la France et l'Angleterre n'a eu et n'aura, parmi les Souverains Français, un plus convaincu, plus sincère et plus persévérant défenseur. Nous nous entretenions souvent des soins à prendre pour éviter tout ce qui pourrait, sans réelle et nationale nécessité, y porter quelque atteinte. Pour le mariage de la Reine d'Espagne en particulier, le Roi avait fait, dès que la question avait apparu, acte de désintéressement et de

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

express on the last point: "As to the pretensions of the Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, you may be at ease on that point; I engage that it shall neither be advanced nor supported by England, and that you shall experience no annoyance from it."

42. The Queen-Regent offers the hand of her daughter the Queen to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg.

In conformity with these stipulations, Queen Christina set about making her selection among the princes descended from Philip V. for the hand of the Queen her daughter. She soon found, however, difficulties all but insurmountable, in the way of nearly all the candidates; and worn out with her embarrassments, and pressed by the Cortes and her ministers to secure, by the marriage of her daughter, the protection of England or France, she at length took the desperate resolution of writing to the reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg, offering the Queen her daughter's hand to his cousin, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. The French annalists assert that this was done at the instigation and with the concurrence of Sir Henry Bulwer, the British minister at Madrid. Of this no proof has been adduced; and, considering the political declarations on the subject made by Sir R. Peel and Lord Aberdeen, it is to the last degree improbable.[1] Certain it is that, the moment Lord Aberdeen became acquainted with this step on the part

[1] Regnault, iii. 154, 155; Guizot, 313, 314; M. Bresson à M. Guizot, July 12, 1846; Revue Retrospective, 180.

franchise; il avait déclaré qu'il ne rechercherait ni n'accepterait cette union pour aucun des princes ses fils, et, quant à l'Infante, qu'il ne la rechercherait pour M. le Duc de Montpensier *que lorsque la Reine serait mariée* ET AURAIT DES ENFANTS; mais une autre déclaration également positive était liée à celle-là; si le mariage, soit de la Reine d'Espagne, soit de l'Infante sa sœur, avec un Prince étranger aux descendants de Philippe V. *devenait probable et imminent*, nous étions affranchis de tout engagement et libres d'agir immédiatement pour parer le coup, en demandant la main, soit de la Reine, soit de l'Infante pour M. le Duc de Montpensier. Toute l'histoire des mariages Espagnols est dans ces deux déclarations, faites hautement l'une et l'autre et bien avant que le moment ne fût venu de les appliquer."—GUIZOT, *Vie de Peel*, p. 309. It will appear immediately from Louis Philippe's confidential letters, that his understanding of the postponing of the Duke de Montpensier's marriage, till the condition regarding *des enfans* from the Queen had occurred, was exactly the same. The Author heard the same account of the agreement between the royal personages, from the ambassador of one of the great powers, to whom it was communicated the next day, who added, "The words were *des enfans; voilà deux*," holding up his two fingers after the French fashion.

of Queen Christina, he communicated it to Louis Philippe, accompanied with the strongest assurances that the proposal had been made without the knowledge or concurrence of the British Government, and that it would receive no countenance from them. At the same time, at the request of M. Guizot, this disavowal was communicated to Sir Henry Bulwer, accompanied with an expression of displeasure at such a thing ever having been mooted with his knowledge.

43. Intrigue for the simultaneous marriage of the Queen and Infanta, which is disapproved by Louis Philippe.

While this hazardous attempt on Queen Christina's part was going on to secure and render permanent the English alliance by a Coburg connection, another intrigue of a totally different kind was in progress at Madrid, the object of which was to secure the marriage of the Queen to the Duke de Cadiz, and *at the same time of the Duke de Montpensier to the Infanta.* This project originated with M. Bresson, the French ambassador at Madrid, an able and zealous man, who, seeing the Spanish Government, including the Cortes, the Queen, and the Ministry, alike determined to bring to an immediate conclusion the marriage of the young Queen with a candidate either of France or England; and being informed of the refusal of the English Government to give any countenance to the Coburg connection, deemed the field open for the immediate and effective advancement of French interests. He proceeded with so much expedition, and his views fell in so much with those of the Queen-Regent's Government, which felt the protection of either France or England indispensable to the support of their revolutionary authority, that he had actually obtained the consent of the Queen and her ministers to the *immediate and simultaneous* marriage of the Queen and the Duke de Cadiz, and the Infanta with the Duke de Montpensier. It is proved by his own letter, brought to light in the *Revue Retrospective* after the fall of Louis Philippe, that this proposal originated with M. Bresson, and he communicated the favourable reception it had met with

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

from the Spanish Government with such alacrity to M. Guizot, that it is evident he knew it was in accordance, if not with the official instructions, at least with the secret wishes of that minister.* Not so his royal master. No sooner did he receive the letter of his ambassador at Madrid, communicating the intelligence of the conclusion of this agreement as to the double and simultaneous marriages, directly contrary to the express agreement of the two Sovereigns, than he disavowed it, and expressed his displeasure in repeated letters in the strongest manner to M. Guizot. These letters are of the highest importance in this question, both in proving the good faith and honour of the French sovereign *up to this point*, and as affording decisive demonstration from the best of all authority, that of Louis Philippe himself, of what had been the real nature of the engagements entered into by him on this subject with Queen Victoria at the Château d'Eu and Windsor Castle.[1] †

[1] D'Haussonville, Politique Extérieur de la France, i. 156, 157; M. Bresson à M. Guizot, July 12, and Louis Philippe à M. Guizot, July 20, 1846—Ibid.

* " J'ai ajouté que le Roi, tenant compte des embarras de la Reine et voulant lui donner un nouveau témoignage de sa sollicitude et de son amitié, était disposé à consentir que, dans cette combinaison Bourbon, M. le Duc de Montpensier prît place à côté du mari de la Reine, c'est à dire que les deux mariages, *si l'un devait faciliter l'autre, se célébrassent ou fussent au moins déclarés simultanément.* Cette grande, importante et indispensable simultanéité n'est pas aussi formellement exprimée dans votre lettre du 5; mais les commentaires et les développements de Desages et de Glucksberg *ne m'ont laissé aucun doute.* Grâces vous en soient rendues. Ce qui était obstacle, obstacle insurmontable, s'est transformé en secours puissant. *J'en suis certain, en sondant votre cœur, vous y trouverez le contentement d'avoir pris cette résolution.* La nouvelle en a été accueillie par la Reine Christine avec une joie dont j'aime à croire la manifestation sincère."—M. BRESSON à M. GUIZOT, Madrid, July 12, 1846; *Revue Rétrospective*, p. 180.

The letters published in this curious collection were found in the Tuileries, and given to the world by the Provisional Government; they may be relied on, therefore, for they were published by no friendly hand.

† " Mon étonnement est d'autant plus grand que Bresson se soit compromis *sur la simultanéité des deux mariages*, qu'il les savait *diamétralement contraires à ma volonté*, et tant à la résolution du Duc de Montpensier et de toute ma famille, qu'il dit lui-même n'y avoir pas été autorisé par vous et qu'il a recours, pour justifier une pareille incartade, à faire des commentaires sur les lettres de Desages et de Glucksberg. Je n'ai point vu M. Desages, mais avec M. Glucksberg j'ai été aussi explicite que faire se pouvait. Je lui ai non seulement fait connaître ma détermination et celle des miens sur ce point, mais je lui ai déduit fort au long les motifs et je lui en ai donné certaines raisons qui rendaient nécessaires des explications catégoriques, avant que le mariage du

Such was the state of matters regarding this subject when the Whig Ministry was displaced by Sir R. Peel's motion of a want of confidence, and Lord Palmerston succeeded Lord Aberdeen at the Foreign Office, and in the direction of diplomatic affairs. This change immediately altered the face of the negotiation. The French Cabinet, and especially M. Guizot, were strongly impressed with the idea that the new Foreign Secretary was adverse to this alliance, and intent only on advancing British interests at their expense; and the manner in which he had defeated their projects in the East by the treaty of 15th July 1840, and bombardment of Acre, had left a sore feeling in their minds which acted in the most powerful way on the future stages of the negotiation. Unfortunately, too, the first step taken by Lord

44. Lord Palmerston's letter of 19th July to Sir H. Bulwer. July 19.

Duc de Montpensier pût être conclu définitivement. *Il résulte de tout cela qu'un désaveu formel est indispensable.* Comment le faire est la seule question à examiner; mais je n'ai jamais trompé personne *et je ne commencerai pas aujourd'hui à laisser tromper qui que ce soit sous mon nom.* Je donne promptement et nettement mon opinion sur la simultanéité et sur la conclusion définitive avant la discussion des articles; c'est encore ce qui peut mieux pallier les embarras que cette triste campagne ne peut manquer de faire."—LOUIS PHILIPPE *à* M. GUIZOT, July 20, 1846; *Revue Rétrospective*, p. 182.

Again, on the same day he writes, "Le Duc de Montpensier me rend vos lettres de Bresson que je vous remets bien à la hâte. Il concourt très vivement à tout ce que je vous ai écrit ce matin. Il faut effacer et annuler formellement tout ce que Bresson a dit en sus de ce que j'avais autorisé. Il faut que les reines sachent *qu'il était interdit à Bresson de dire ce qu'il a dit et que la simultanéité est inadmissible.* Il nous a fait là une rude campagne; il est nécessaire qu'elle soit *biffée* et le plus tôt possible—je ne resterai pas sous le coup d'avoir fait contracter, en mon nom, un engagement que je ne peux ni ne veux tenir et que j'avais formellement interdit."—LOUIS PHILIPPE *à* M. GUIZOT, July 20, 1846; *Revue Rétrospective*, p. 182.

Again, four days after, Louis Philippe wrote to M. Guizot, "*Je vois avec plaisir que votre opinion est d'accord avec la mienne* sur la campagne que Bresson vient de nous faire sur la simultanéité, et que seulement vous pensez que Bresson ne s'est pas aussi formellement engagé que je le craignais. Moi je pense au contraire que, connaissant bien mon opinion et celle de ma famille sur la simultanéité, il a voulu nous bien lier sur ce point et que, s'il y a différence entre ce qu'il a dit à la reine et ce qu'il vous a écrit, elle consiste en ce qu'il se sera plus engagé avec la Reine qu'il ne nous aura dit. Il faut donc qu'il n'y ait pas seulement un désaveu verbal de la part de Bresson, qui serait *verba volantia*, même s'il le faisait complètement, ce qu'il ne fera jamais probablement, mais que ce désaveu *soit remis par écrit à la Reine Christine*, de manière à ce qu'on ne puisse jamais essayer d'en nier le positif ou d'en contester la notification."—*Revue Rétrospective*, p. 184.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

Palmerston was one which, in appearance at least, gave a colour to these suspicions. On the 19th July he addressed a letter of instructions to Sir Henry Bulwer, which commenced with these words: "The candidates for the hand of the Queen of Spain are now reduced to three: *Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg*, and the two sons of the Infant Don François de Paule. The Government of Her Majesty have only to express their sincere desire that the choice may be made of the one who may unite the qualities most likely to secure the happiness of the Queen and the prosperity of the Spanish nation." A copy of this letter was, in pursuance of the *entente cordiale* between the two nations, read by Lord Palmerston to the Comte de Jarnac, the French ambassador at London, who did not conceal his surprise at Prince Coburg being still held forth as one of the suitors of the Queen. The despatch, however, having been sent off, and a copy only read, Lord Palmerston contented himself with saying that the British Government had no intention of supporting Prince Coburg, and that these words were put in only *narrativé* as a summary of the existing state of affairs. Lord Cowley, the English ambassador at Paris, gave Louis Philippe the strongest assurances of the same tenor, in a long conference they had on the subject, two days after, on the evening of the 25th July; and on the 23d August, Lord Normanby, who had succeeded Lord Cowley as ambassador at that court, intimated officially to M. Guizot that the British Government was taking steps *to support Don Enrique*, one of the descendants of Philip V. This prince was within the agreed-on limits; and M. Guizot replied, that if he was agreeable to the Queen of Spain *the Court of France would be perfectly satisfied.**

July 25. Aug. 23.

* "On a dit que le Gouvernement Anglais, en tenant ce langage, n'avait nulle intention de pousser au mariage du Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg avec la Reine Isabelle. *Je suis prêt à l'admettre:* mais peu importent, en politique, les intentions; les effets sont tout."—GUIZOT, *Vie de Peel*, p. 314.

"Lord Cowley est venu hier au soir et j'ai eu avec lui une conversation très

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

45. Terror of M. Guizot and Louis Philippe of the Coburg proposal.

But when M. Guizot professed himself to be perfectly satisfied with Don Enrique, he in reality knew that the matter had been otherwise arranged; and that, in defiance of the engagements entered into at the Château d'Eu and Windsor, the Queen was to be married to the Duke de Cadiz, *and the Infanta at the same time to the Duke de Montpensier*. It is now known that both M. Guizot and Louis Philippe, immediately on receipt of the Count de Jarnac's letter communicating the tenor of Lord Palmerston's instructions of the 19th to Sir Henry Bulwer, were seized with the most mortal apprehensions of being overreached in this matter as they had been six years before in the Eastern question; and this terror led them to forget altogether their previous engagements with the Court of London. Guizot wrote to his Sovereign with the enclosed copy: "My first impression on receiving the enclosed was that we ought to attach ourselves more than ever *to our actual idea*, '*Cadiz and Montpensier*.' Queen Christina and the Moderate party cannot fail to see that by it alone can they be rendered the masters by securing the support of the King of France, while any other combination will deliver them infallibly into the hands of their enemies, the Radicals."[1] And Louis Philippe,

July 24.

[1] Revue Retrospective, 184.

longue et bien vive sur les instructions communiquées par Lord Palmerston. Pour être bref, il a généreusement essayé de les défendre en disant que tout cela n'était que pour maintenir ses dires précédents. '*That these instructions could not be acted upon—certainly not*, que Bulwer s'en garderait bien.' Je lui ai demandé permission de n'en rien croire et que les conséquences de ceci m'alarmaient au plus haut degré."—LOUIS PHILIPPE *à* M. GUIZOT, 26 *Juillet*, 1846; *Révue Rétrospective*, p. 187.

"L'ambassadeur d'Angleterre à Paris, Lord Normanby, *fit même connaître officiellement à M. Guizot* que son Gouvernement faisait des démarches pour obtenir la main de la Reine en faveur de Don Enrique. Il n'y avait pas d'objection à faire: ce prince était dans les conditions exigées par le Gouvernement Français. Aussi M. Guizot répondit que si la Reine d'Espagne était à faire choix de Don Enrique *ce choix satisfcrait parfaitement la Cour de France*. Mais il savait qu'il n'avait pas à craindre cette alternative. En effet la conférence entre M. Guizot et Lord Normanby avait lieu le 23 Aout; et dans la nuit du 26 ou 27 la Reine Isabelle faisait savoir à ses ministres que son choix était fixé sur le Duc de Cadiz, et, immédiatement après, M. Bresson demandait officiellement la main de l'Infante pour le Duc de Montpensier. *Elle lui fut accordée*."—REGNAULT, iii. 160, 161.

CHAP. XLVI.

1846. July 25.

on receiving it next morning, replied: "The perusal of the documents you have sent me, which I received this morning, and which I now return, has left me a prey to the most painful impressions. *Not that I expected better from Lord Palmerston;* but that I thought he would not so soon have thrown off the mask. My present impression is that we must return blow for blow. Jarnac has acquitted himself wonderfully; but we must prepare an answer to that astounding and detestable dispute, of which I think we shall make Lord Palmerston bitterly repent. Do not, however, in your letters to Bresson use that expression 'Cadiz and Montpensier.' It savours too much of *simultaneity,* and is disagreeable to all my family, whom it suits as little as it does me."[1] Guizot answered the same day: "I am entirely of your Majesty's opinion that you should not engage at once to have the marriages concluded simultaneously; but I pray you to reflect on the extreme importance and delicacy of the crisis. There is evidently a great effort about to be made for the Coburg. Our fence against this threat is, 'Cadiz and Montpensier.' Let us not weaken that defence at the very moment when we have most need of it. If the policy of London succeeds, and the Coburg arrives, the consequences will be most serious both here and at Madrid.[2]

[1] Revue Retrospective, 185.

July 25.

[2] Revue Retrospective, 186.

46. The two marriages are contracted on the same day.

When these had become the views of the King and his Ministers, it is not surprising that an immediate change in the line of conduct ensued, and that their consent was given to the immediate marriage of the Queen with the Duke de Cadiz simultaneously with that of the Infanta with the Duke de Montpensier. M. Guizot has told us so himself. "Under the influence," says he, "of these united circumstances, it was evident that, whether the English Government desired it or not, the Coburg marriage had become probable and imminent. I thought so, and I remain convinced that I judged correctly. I did not hesitate. I gave the King the advice, and to Count Bresson, his ambassador at Madrid, to press the

immediate conclusion of the double marriage of the Queen of Spain with the Infant Don François d'Apoze (Duke of Cadiz) and of the Infanta with the Duke de Montpensier. The French policy, national as well as royal, willed that the throne of Spain should not go out of the house of Bourbon. I had openly laid down that principle, and I caused it to triumph at the very moment when it was on the point of failing."[1] Two days after this correspondence the Duke de Montpensier set out from Paris, and on the 10th October he was married to the Infanta at the same altar, and immediately after the marriage of the Queen to the Duke de Cadiz.[2]

[1] Guizot, Vie de Peel, 314, 315.

[2] Regnault, iii. 162,163; Moniteur, Oct. 16, 1846.

47. Coldness in consequence of the British and French Governments.

It may readily be conceived that M. Guizot had no small difficulty in announcing this sudden change of resolution on the part of the French Government to the English ambassador, the more especially after the declaration which he himself had made to Lord Normanby, a few days before, that the French Government would be perfectly satisfied with Don Enrique, whom the Cabinet of London were inclined to support. He first said on 1st September, in a conference on the subject, to Lord Normanby, that the two marriages should not take place at the same time. Afterwards, on the 23d September, when the subject was again under discussion between the same parties, and the intention of marrying the two princesses at the same time could no longer be concealed, he denied that he had ever made use of these expressions; and when the actual words used were recalled to his recollection, he had recourse to the strange and discreditable subterfuge, "The two marriages will not take place at the same time, *for the Queen will be married first!*" The indignation of the British Government exhaled in an angry note addressed by Sir Henry Bulwer at Madrid to M. Isturitz, the Spanish Foreign Minister;* and in a

* "En ce moment, je vois la main d'une jeune Princesse de quatorze ans donnée d'une manière opposée aux représentations d'au moins une des grandes Puissances, dont l'amitié pour l'Espagne est bien connue dans l'histoire, et dont l'amitié peut mériter d'être cultivée. Je vois ce mariage préparé

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

holograph letter from Queen Victoria to Louis Philippe no attempt was made to conceal the impression, though couched in measured terms, that the French Government had broken their pledged faith. But M. Guizot abated nothing of his haughty bearing, and instead of expressing regret at the coldness which it had occasioned between the two Governments, said, "France has not seen such a day since the Revolution of 1830."[1] *

[1] Regnault, iii. 162, 163; Lord Normanby to Lord Palmerston, Sept. 24, 1846; Parl. Papers.

48. Disastrous effects of this coldness.

Thus was the *entente cordiale* between the Governments of France and England, so essential to the peace and independence of Europe, broken up—and broken up in such a way, and on such a question, that reconciliation between the parties was rendered impossible. Not only were national interests of the most important kind brought into collision, and national rivalries of the keenest sort again awakened, but with these were mingled the indignation at broken faith—the soreness at overreached diplomacy. These feelings, as is always the case with the party which has been worsted in the strife, were much more keen in England than France. One chorus of indignation burst from the whole English press at this alleged breach of faith on the part of Louis Philippe, and

secrètement, annoncé à l'improviste, conduit à sa fin avec une rapidité inconcevable: il fait renaître des prétentions qui se combattent, réveille des traités qui dormaient, menace l'Espagne du renouvellement de la guerre civile; il agite enfin et bouleverse les heureuses et pacifiques relations actuelles de l'Europe."

M. Isturitz replied: "Le Gouvernement Britannique, qui se montre si jaloux de l'indépendance de l'Espagne, ne trouvera pas mauvais que l'Espagne agisse dans les limites tracées par les lois internationales; c'est-à-dire, sans blesser les intérêts des autres gouvernements, comme c'est le cas dans cette question à propos de laquelle l'Angleterre ne saurait citer aucune violation des traités; le Gouvernement Britannique ne trouvera pas mauvais, je le répète, que l'Espagne repousse énergiquement une protestation qui menace son indépendance, et qu'à son tour elle proteste contre une pareille prétention. Permettez-moi de dire que le dépôt sacré de l'indépendance Espagnole n'est confié à la vigilance d'aucune nation étrangère; ce dépôt est gardé par la loyauté Espagnole, qui s'est montrée inébranlable, même au milieu des plus grandes calamités."—*Regnault*, iii. 363, 364.

* "Gentlemen, this is the first grand thing that we have effected completely single-handed, in Europe, since 1830. Impartial Europe has delivered her judgment to that effect."—M. GUIZOT'S words, January 16, 1847; *Ann. Reg.* 1847, 396.

the violation of the royal word pledged to Queen Victoria amidst the festivities of the Château d'Eu and Windsor Castle. These invectives were eagerly imported into France by the Liberal journals of that country, which, after having exhausted the whole vocabulary of abuse founded on alleged oppression, despotism, and abandonment of principle by the Citizen King, were charmed to find the still more serious charges of personal breach of faith and duplicity brought against him by the power which had hitherto given him its strongest support.

49. Its effects on the future of France and England.

Immense was the effect of this estrangement between France and England upon the internal and external situation of both countries. No event since the fall of Charles X. is to be compared with it in importance. By depriving Louis Philippe of the moral support of England it essentially weakened his throne, both in the estimation of foreign powers and of his own subjects. It lowered his character with many who had hitherto from necessity given him their support, and encouraged his enemies both at home and abroad by diffusing the belief that, in any crisis, either external or internal, he could look for no support from this country. The Spanish Alliance, in the existing state of Europe, gave him nothing in comparison. Weakened by the loss of her colonies, distracted by the passions, and still bleeding at every pore from the wounds of civil war, Spain could render no assistance to France. Guizot's master-stroke was as great a mistake in policy as it was a deviation from faith. Its consequences were even more disastrous in the external relations and influence of the two countries than on their internal stability. By separating the two Western Powers, whose union could alone check the encroachments of Russia in Eastern Europe, it left the field, both in Poland and on the Danube, open to Muscovite ambition. From this disastrous severance is to be dated a series of causes and effects which went on in necessary sequence till Europe was shaken to its centre by the French Revolution, and,

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

necessity having taught wisdom, the alliance of France and England, thus unhappily severed, was cemented anew at Inkermann and Sebastopol.

50. Who was to blame in these marriages.

Seeing the Spanish marriages have been attended with these highly important and calamitous results, it becomes of the greatest importance to determine which party was to blame in the contracting of them, and upon whom does the charge of breach of faith really rest. The charge, and the serious one, of breach of faith, undoubtedly attaches to the French monarch, or rather his minister M. Guizot, the chief man in the whole Spanish intrigue. It is now fully ascertained by the best of all evidence—that of Louis Philippe and M. Guizot themselves—that the agreement between the former and Queen Victoria, contracted amidst the festivities of the Château d'Eu and Windsor, was, that the Queen of Spain was to bestow her hand on a descendant of Philip V., and that the Duke de Montpensier was to marry the Infanta, but not till the Queen had given birth to "children." She did marry a descendant of Philip V., and England never urged any other marriage; on the contrary, she refused her consent to the Coburg alliance when it had been formally demanded by the Queen-Regent of Spain. Then how is the hurrying on of the Montpensier marriage, and its conclusion on the same day, and at the same altar as that of the Queen, to be justified? Confessedly this can be done on no other ground than the letter of Lord Palmerston, of 19th July, to Sir H. Bulwer, communicated to the French ambassador in London, which placed Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg among the suitors of the Queen, and gave him the first place on the list. It is on this ground, accordingly, *and this alone*, that the breach of engagement is justified by the diplomatists and historians of France. It may be conceded that it was an unfortunate and ill-advised step on the part of Lord Palmerston to name him at all among the royal suitors, the more especially as it was likely to give umbrage to France, and the

consent of England to the suit of the German prince had been recently and formally refused.

But that this diplomatic slip afforded no vindication whatever of the breach of engagement is evident from the following considerations:—1. The Prince was mentioned as a suitor by Lord Palmerston, in his letter of the 19th, only *narrativê*, and in summing up at the outset of the letter the existing state of affairs; and this was strictly true, as the hand of the Queen had recently been offered to him by the Queen-Regent of Spain: 2, It was not said that England would support his pretensions; on the contrary, the Government had formally refused their consent to it, and evinced its good faith by intimating the proposal, and their declinature of it, to the Cabinet of the Tuileries; and this was known to Louis Philippe, and duly appreciated by him. 3, The refusal of England to support the Coburg alliance was intimated by Lord Palmerston to the French ambassador when the letter mentioning it was read on 20th July; the same was repeated by Lord Cowley to Louis Philippe in person, on 25th July; it was promised on September 1, by Guizot to Lord Normanby, that the two marriages should not take place at the same time; and on the 23d September it was officially notified to M. Guizot that England supported the suit of *Don Enrique, not Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg*, with which the French minister professed himself perfectly satisfied. 4, Nevertheless, in the face of all this, the French Government urged on both marriages, which were celebrated on the same day, and at the same altar, three weeks after, at Madrid, on 10th October. In these circumstances, it is evident that Lord Palmerston's slip afforded M. Guizot no real excuse, but was merely laid hold of by him as a pretext to cover an advantage to France which he deemed of importance, but which could not be obtained without a real breach of the royal faith of his master.

51. Lord Palmerston's was an imprudent slip; Guizot's a breach of faith.

It soon appeared how serious were to be the conse-

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

52. Effects of this disunion of France and England on Poland.

quences of this disunion of France and England upon the balance of power, and interests of the lesser states in Europe. When the allied forces occupied Cracow on March 3, 1846, after the Polish insurrection, it was merely stipulated that the militia of the republic should not be reorganised, and that the town should be occupied alternately by the troops of the three powers. This was formally agreed to in a memorandum signed, on the 4th April following, by the plenipotentiaries of Austria, Russia, and Prussia. Considering the use which the inhabitants of Cracow had made of their nationality while they enjoyed it, and the manner in which they had converted their town into an advanced post, from which they might scatter the seeds of disaffection and rebellion through all the provinces of Old Poland, now incorporated with the partitioning powers, no one, on reasonable grounds, could make any objection to this arrangement, which was obviously of a provisional nature only, and left the separate existence of the republic of Cracow untouched. But no sooner did the Northern Powers receive intelligence of the alienation of France and England on the Spanish marriage than they altered their views, and resolved to make this temporary outbreak a pretext for the incorporation of Cracow, with its dependent territory, with Austria, upon certain indemnities being provided to Russia and Prussia. By a treaty concluded, accordingly, on 11th November 1846, the city of Cracow, with twenty-three square miles (German) of territory, and a hundred and fifty-six thousand inhabitants, was incorporated with Austria, and united with its province of Gallicia. Russia received as an indemnity certain territories in the north of Gallicia adjacent to Lithuania, and Prussia the town of Hatzen Plotz, with its adjacent territory. Thus was completed the final partition of Poland, and the partial restoration of its nationality, effected by Lord Castlereagh at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, finally demolished.[1] A strange and unlooked-for result to follow the

March 3. April 4.

Nov. 11, 1846.

[1] Treaty, Nov. 11, 1846; Mart. Sup.; Regnault, iii. 169, 171; D'Haussonville, ii. 177, 186.

entire triumph of Liberal principles for fifteen years back, both in Paris and London; but easily accounted for, when the clashing of the ambition which these principles have exerted is taken into consideration, and the manner in which the concord of France and England had been destroyed by the jealousies awakened by the measures adopted by both in regard to the Spanish succession.

53. Diplomatic differences of France and England on the Treaty of Utrecht.

It was not merely by removing all apprehension of an armed intervention of England and France in the affairs of Poland, that the coldness between these two powers tended to set free the Northern potentates, and hasten the extinction of the last remnants of its nationality. The diplomatic position and objects of the two powers, after the marriages of the Queen and the Infanta had been celebrated, led still more directly to the same result. Sensible, when it was too late, of the enormous errors he had committed in altering the order of succession in Spain, and forcing a queen upon an unwilling people, Lord Palmerston made strenuous efforts, when its effects had become apparent by the marriage of the Duke de Montpensier to the Infanta, to get the Northern powers, and Russia in particular, to adhere to his interpretation of the Treaty of Utrecht in regard to intermarriages of the royal families of France and Spain. This interpretation did not consist, as the French historians assert, in the plea that all marriages between these royal houses were prohibited by that treaty. Lord Palmerston was too well versed in diplomatic lore and recent history not to know that there was not a word in the treaty prohibitory of such marriages, and that, accordingly, they had repeatedly since taken place between the two royal families without objection from any quarter whatever.* What

* Marriages between French princes and Spanish princesses, accordingly, have been very frequent since the Treaty of Utrecht. One took place on 21st January 1721, another on 25th August 1739; and on 23d January 1745 the Dauphin of France married the princess who, but for the entail on the male line contained in the Treaty of Utrecht, would have been heiress of the crown of Spain. But on none of these occasions was it ever supposed that any in-

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

he maintained was, that the Treaty of Utrecht forbade any prince of the house of Orléans to acquire the Spanish crown by marriage or otherwise.[1] But this was a vain conceit; there was not a word in the Treaty of Utrecht excluding the house of Orléans from the Spanish throne, if they chose to relinquish the French crown, or their right of succession to it. The union of the two crowns on one head was forbidden by the Treaty of Utrecht, but not the acquisition of the two crowns *by brothers of the same family*,—the danger which, by the consequences of Lord Palmerston's own act in placing the Queen on the throne, was now impending. Besides, even if the marriage had been contrary to the Treaty of Utrecht, he could not refer to it as founding an objection to its violation; for, having himself set the example of violating the treaty by setting aside the male line, he could not rest upon it as conferring any other right. As little was he entitled to object to the incorporation of Cracow as being contrary to the Treaty of Vienna, for he himself had been the first to break through that treaty by partitioning the kingdom of the Netherlands, which it guaranteed; and the Northern powers might, by a mere variation of names, retort on him his own words: "It will not escape the loyalty of the Court of London, that if the Treaty of Vienna is not good on the Rhine or the Po, neither is it on the Vistula."[2]*

[1] Parl. Deb. xi. 91.

[2] D'Haussonville, ii. 182, 183; Regnault, iii. 166, 167.

The full extent of the disastrous effects thus introduced

fringement of the Treaty of Utrecht had taken place, or that any danger to the balance of power had been incurred. Nay, Louis XV. was publicly, and with the knowledge of all Europe, affianced, early in life, to the Infanta of Spain. She was brought to Paris, and lived long at Versailles, in order to be initiated into the customs of the French court; and the marriage was at length broken off, not from any objection on the part of the English ambassador, or the diplomatic body in Europe, but because, the princess being only thirteen and the king nineteen, the marriage could not take place so soon as the impatience of his subjects required, and the match was in consequence broken off, and he married Maria Leckzinski, daughter of the King of Poland.—See DE TOCQUEVILLE'S *Histoire de Louis XV.*, i. 172.

* "Il n'échappera pas à la loyauté des Cours du Nord, que si les Traités de Vienne ne sont pas bons sur la Vistule, ils ne sont pas meilleurs sur le Rhin et sur le Po."—D'HAUSSONVILLE, *Politique Extérieure de la France*, ii. 182.

into the diplomacy of Europe by the divisions of the Western powers, will not be duly appreciated unless the cordial terms on which they were, previous to the affair of the Spanish marriages, is taken into consideration. It is thus set forth by the chosen historian of the French diplomacy under the reign of Louis Philippe: "Unmistakable symptoms proved to entire Europe the fortunate changes which had taken place in the relations of France and England. Queen Victoria, disembarked at Treport, suddenly appeared at the Château d'Eu. The most cordial intimacy, arising naturally from the circumstances, and favoured by the hundred facilities of country life, sprang up between the two chiefs of the great constitutional monarchies. Shortly after, during the visit at Windsor, the King of the French received the most convincing proof of the profound impression which these moments, passed in the bosom of the royal family, had left in the breast of the Queen of England. Not content with surrounding her royal guest with the most delicate attentions, and bestowing on him the proofs of the most affectionate respect, desirous to join to the manifestation of her personal regard a further proof of her royal inclination as sovereign, Queen Victoria invested him with the dignities most coveted by foreign monarchs. In their turn, the English people, desirous to associate themselves with the feelings of their young Queen, bestowed on the representative of the French nation an honour which no crowned head had ever received. Louis Philippe, being unable to accept the magnificent hospitality which the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London proposed to have offered to him at Guildhall, that great corporation, the representative of the rich and intelligent classes of the metropolis, did not hesitate to pass the gates of the City, and to offer him at Windsor an address of respectful felicitation. Such an unusual step was intended to honour France itself, not less than its King.[1] France did not misunderstand it;

54. Cordiality of France and England before the affair of the Spanish marriages.

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 68, 69.

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

and these shining marks of regard were the more acceptable, that they could be accepted with pride from a nation whom they were then in the happy course of emulating only in peace, prosperity, and grandeur."

55. Affairs of Greece, and disaccord of France and England regarding it.

The ill effects of the disaccord of France and England were not confined to Poland. They appeared in an equally striking manner in Greece, Italy, and Switzerland. The constitutional system, established in the first of these countries by the Governments of the three countries which had established the infant State, having been found, as might have been expected, entirely at variance with the habits and temper of at least the whole continental portion of Greece, had gradually gone into desuetude; and in 1835, Lord Palmerston, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, had made it a formal ground of complaint against the French Government, that they had endeavoured to establish in Greece a system altogether at variance with the habits and wishes of the inhabitants. No overt act, however, followed this expression of opinion, and King Otho practically ruled the country with despotic authority for eight years afterwards. This mode of administration, however, although suitable to the clannish habits and ideas of the mountaineers in continental Greece, was little calculated to meet the wishes of the mercantile islanders and the constitutional party, who had been mainly instrumental in establishing the independence of the country. These discontents at length acquired such strength that they ended in a revolution, which altered the form of the government. On the 15th September 1843, a general movement took place, headed by a powerful party styled the "Philorthodox," secretly supported by the Russian ministers and the Court of St Petersburg. The insurrection was so generally supported that it had the whole features of a national movement.[1] Without any resistance on the part of the Government, which was taken completely by surprise, a constitutional monarchy was

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 79, 83; Ann. Hist. xxvi. 312, 319.

proclaimed; a new ministry, with M. Metaxas at its head, established; and a committee appointed to arrange the details of a constitution.

56. Which is at first supported, and then disowned, by Russia.

The object of Russia in supporting this change was to supplant the influence of the German sovereign in the government of the country; it was an anti-Bavarian, not a Liberal movement. It was no part of the policy of the Court of St Petersburg to establish constitutional monarchies in the East, or to surround itself with a zone of free institutions; it desired to render its own authority paramount, and nothing more. The revolution of 3d September had passed their intentions; it had become constitutional, when they only desired it to be dynastic. They lost no time, therefore, in recalling their minister, M. Kataensy, and in ordering M. Calerji, the brother of the chief leader in the revolution, to quit their service. As a natural consequence, the chief direction of the country, during the formation of its constitution, devolved on France and England, the natural guardians of a State which aspired to be free while maturing its institutions, and the most perfect accordance of views prevailed for long between the ministers of the two nations on the subject. Sir Edmund Lyons, the English, and M. Piscatory, the French Minister, went hand in hand in all measures connected with the formation of the constitution, as did Lord Aberdeen and M. Guizot, as long as the former remained at the head of foreign affairs in England.[1] *

[1] Lord Aberdeen to Sir E. Lyons, Sept. 27, 1843; M. Guizot à M. Piscatory, Sept. 27, 1843; D'Haussonville, ii. 84, 85.

* "Il n'y a qu'une bonne politique, celle que *font ensemble la France et l'Angleterre*. C'est vrai partout; c'est vrai surtout en Grèce. Vous et moi, MM. Mavrocordato et Colletti voulant les mêmes choix, tendant au même but, par les mêmes moyens, la partie monarchique et constitutionnelle est gagnée en Grèce."—M. Piscatory à M. Guizot, 30th October 1843.

"Quant à l'entente avec mon collègue d'Angleterre, Sir E. Lyons, *elle est complète*. Le Pape la désire et en prend grande confiance."—M. Piscatory à M. Guizot, 30th September 1843; D'Haussonville, *Politique Extérieure de la France*, ii. 87.

"Tous les hommes disent, 'Si M. Colletti et M. Mavrocordato, le ministre d'Angleterre et le ministre de France, continuent à s'entendre, comme ils font aujourd'hui, la cause est gagnée.'"—M. Piscatory à M. Guizot, 10th November 1843; Ibid. ii. 88.

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

These cordial dispositions on both sides were in the highest degree agreeable to Louis Philippe and M. Guizot, and they continued for a considerable time to animate the two cabinets in this particular, as well as their respective ministers.

57. Commencement of a coldness, which approaches to a rupture.

The first interruption to these feelings took place in 1844, when it became necessary to appoint a new ministry in consequence of M. Metaxas and his colleagues, who first held the helm after the revolution, having resigned. M. Mavrocordato, who had resided long in London, was supported by the English cabinet; M. Colletti, who had done the same at Paris, and had numerous political connections there, by the French. The

April 11, 1844.

former was selected by King Otho to form a cabinet, but it was still supported by M. Colletti, and Piscatory, on the part of France, lent it for some time a generous and disinterested aid. By degrees, however, the jealousy which was naturally to be looked for in such circumstances, made its appearance, and Mavrocordato's ministry having been displaced by a vote of the Chambers, a

Aug. 18, 1844.

new ministry was formed, composed of M. Colletti, M. Metaxas, and their respective friends. This ministerial change was the commencement of the misunderstanding of France and England on the affairs of Greece. The coldness continued through the whole of 1845, during which Colletti really rested on the support of France, and Mavrocordato as plainly on that of England. Appearances, however, were still kept up, and there was no ostensible divergence between the embassies of the rival powers as long as Lord Aberdeen remained at the Foreign Office in London. But when Lord Palmerston succeeded, and the affairs of the Spanish marriages had embittered the feelings of the two Cabinets, the division became open and serious. In August 1847, Lord Palmerston endeavoured to displace the Colletti ministry, and insisted peremptorily for the immediate payment of the arrears of interest which had been accumulating for some

years on the Greek Loan, advanced by Great Britain to the Hellenic Government on the first establishment of their independence. The Russian and German cabinets, to avoid the consequences of so serious a division, strongly advised the Cabinet of Athens to pay up the arrears, and thus avoid the pretext for an open rupture, expressing, at the same time, their conviction that it was "not the money which Lord Palmerston wished, but the removal of M. Colletti." * So serious did matters become, that a large number of British vessels of war unexpectedly made their appearance in the Greek waters; and M. Colletti, who was an able and patriotic minister, exhausted by the fatigues of the contest, breathed his last, and "his great soul went," to use the expression of M. Guizot, "to rejoin the battalion of Plutarch."[1] †

[1] M. Piscatory à M. Guizot, Sept. 10, 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 112, 114.

58. Increased division between France and England regarding Greece.

The death of Colletti was a great misfortune to Greece, and tended still farther to increase the division on Hellenic affairs between France and England. The King of Bavaria, anxious to act the part of a mediator between them, proposed a coalition ministry, in which Metaxas and Tricoupi should bear a part; but to this Lord Palmerston refused to accede, alleging that the state of affairs in Greece was essentially vicious, and that he could agree to no cabinet of which Mavrocordato was not the head, and which was not preceded by a dissolution of the Chambers. To these conditions King Otho refused to accede, and the consequence was that a civil war broke out. Patras was several days in the

* "Si on nous demande un conseil nous donnerons celui de payer, parcequ'il est conforme à mes instructions: mais nous sommes convaincus qu'en payant la somme demandée, on ne gagnera rien. Ce n'est pas évidemment au Trésor Grec qu'en veut Lord Palmerston—c'est à M. Colletti."—M. Piscatory à M. Guizot, Août 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. iii.

† His last moments were thus described by an eyewitness: "Parlez de moi à mes amis en France. Faites mes adieux à M. Guizot, à M. de Bresson, à M. Eynard. Jusqu'au dernier moment, tant que j'ai pu, j'ai suivi leurs conseils. Ils doivent être contents de moi. Je laisse mon pays bien malade. Mon œuvre n'est pas achevée. Pourquoi le Roi n'a-t-il pas voulu me connaître il y a deux ans? Aujourd'hui je mourrais tranquille. Je ne puis plus parler, recouchez-moi; je voudrais m'endormir." — M. Piscatory à M. Guizot. September 1847; Ibid. ii. 113.

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

hands of the insurgents; and nearly the whole hill districts of continental Greece, where the chief strength of the adherents of Mavrocordato lay, were won by their arms. At length, by the efforts of the foreign ambassadors, peace was restored, and a ministry was established which carried out the system of Colletti, and was in the interest of France.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 114, 117; Regnault, iii. 169,172.

59. Differences regarding Portugal and La Plata.

The evil effects of this division appeared in every quarter where the French and English diplomatists were brought into collision. Portugal, ever the chosen and long-established seat of British influence, became the theatre of discord. The Queen Donna Maria having thrown herself into the arms of the Conservative party, naturally inclined to France, the acknowledged head of that party in Europe; and Lord Palmerston as naturally inclined to support the provincial juntas, which contended for the more democratic regime. At length, by the mediation of the other powers, a sort of compromise was established between them; a change of ministry took place; the decrees adverse to the constitutional party were recalled, an amnesty accorded, and a Cortes convoked. This compromise for a time stilled the waves of discord in Portugal, by re-establishing the English influence and the ascendant of the democratic party; but being adverse to the secret wishes of France, it tended only to augment the alienation of the two Cabinets. An incident occurred soon after, which at first had a serious aspect, and threatened to produce a direct collision between the two Governments, in consequence of the raising of the blockade of Monte Video by the British naval forces, which had been commenced by them, conjointly with the French, on occasion of a rupture between the government of that town on the one hand, and Rosas and Oribe, revolutionary chiefs, on the other.[2] This delicate matter, however, was adjusted by Lord John Russell, in the absence of Lord Palmerston, who was out of town, disavowing the act; to which the latter, on his return, acceded, so that the

Aug. 20, 1847.

[2] M. de Broglie à M. Guizot, Aug. 29, 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 284, 292.

complaints of the French Cabinet, which in reality were well-founded, were appeased.

Affairs at Madrid, and alienation of the King and Queen.

A more serious cause of discord was likely to have arisen at Madrid in consequence of a coldness which had supervened between the King and Queen within less than a year after their ill-assorted union. Like other marriages, contracted from considerations of policy or convenience, not inclination, this marriage had proved extremely unfortunate; and the partiality of the Queen for a personal favourite, General Serrano, was scarcely disguised, and excited no little attention and scandal in the court. The British ambassador was no stranger to these intrigues; and such was the condition of the court, and so insecure the foundations of government, that no less than three ministries, all of them in the French or Conservative interest, had been overturned within a year after the Queen's marriage. "Nothing," said the French minister at Madrid, "is so easy as for the English embassy to overturn a Moderate ministry; we have seen three fall, one after another, within a year. Nothing would be easier than for the French legation to overturn a Progresista ministry, if it chose to set about it. But what would all that serve but to advance the cause of our enemies; and what is so likely to render the throne vacant, as to show that all government at Madrid has become impossible?" So serious became the discord between the Queen and her husband, that a divorce was openly talked of, and anxiously discussed at the French and English embassies; and to render the breach more irreparable, and the scandal greater, it was hinted that the principal ground of divorce would be, not any supervening fault on the part of either of the spouses, but an original incapacity on the part of the duke, which, according to the civil though not the canon law, had rendered the marriage null *ab initio*.[1] This report tended only still farther to widen the breach between the English and French parties; and it was commonly asserted by the

[1] L'Ambassadeur de France à M. Guizot, Sept. 16, 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 296.

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

former, that it was the knowledge of this circumstance which had occasioned the sudden conversion of Louis Philippe to the Montpensier marriage. Incredible as such a story is, there are passages in the private correspondence of the French ambassador at London with M. Guizot, which give some countenance to part, at least, of such an idea.*

61. Affairs of Italy. Death of the Pope, and accession of Pius IX.

While the clouds were in this manner lowering on so many sides in the diplomatic horizon, a still more threatening storm was arising in a quarter even nearer to France than the Spanish peninsula. In ITALY the symptoms—the unmistakable symptoms—of a coming convulsion, were beginning to become apparent. The crisis was brought on by the death of Pope Gregory XVI., which took place on 1st June 1846. His long reign, which began on 3d February 1831, had been a continual struggle with difficulty and danger. The day after his election the revolution broke out at Modena; in a few days the whole of Romagna had been in insurrection; Bologna, Ancona, Perugia, had opened their gates to the insurgents, and from the heights of Otricoli their victorious columns beheld the dome of St Peter's, and bade defiance to the Papal Government in the plenitude of its power. The deceased Pope never got over the

* "Sur la question du divorce j'ai deux choses à vous dire; la première est que toute idée de divorce est un rêve et une folie. Si la Reine d'Espagne veut divorcer, elle n'a qu'un parti à prendre, c'est de faire comme Henri VIII., de se faire Protestante, et de faire son royaume Protestant. Aucun Pape, aucun Prêtre Catholique non excommunié, n'admettra un seul instant l'idée d'un divorce; *et pour que le mariage soit déclaré nul ab initio*, il faudrait qu'il fût contracté en violation des lois de l'Eglise, ce qui n'est pas. . . . . Il importe essentiellement que l'Angleterre se tienne pour satisfaite de l'ordre des choses établies en Espagne: dans le cas contraire, je prévois tout, et ne réponds de rien. Si vous vous aperceviez que nous travaillions à détruire cet ordre de choses à notre profit, à hâter, je le répète, d'un seul jour, d'une seule heure, *les droits si éloignés de Madame la Duchesse de Montpensier*, vous auriez toute raison d'y regarder de très-près; vous auriez tout droit de vous y opposer. Ce que vous feriez en pareil cas, je ne vous le demande pas; peut-être ne le savez vous pas vous-même; mais je reconnais toute l'étendue de vos droits." —L'AMBASSADEUR DE FRANCE *à Londres à* M. GUIZOT, 16 September 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 296, 297.

impression produced by these threatening events in the very outset of his career. His reign was a long and often arduous struggle with the revolutionary Liberals, against whom he was sometimes, at the instigation of the victorious Austrians, obliged to adopt measures of rigour little in unison with the native humanity of his disposition. Fearful of letting in the point of the revolutionary wedge, he saw no safety but in sturdy resistance to all measures of reform, which he regarded as the first letting in of the inundation. The pent-up waters only acquired additional strength by being so long compressed; but as the age of the Pontiff promised a change ere long in the Papal Government, the Liberals remained quiet in the mean time, and placed all their hopes in a change of policy on the part of his successor.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 186, 187; Regnault, iii. 309; Ann. Hist. xxix. 437, 439.

62. Election and character of Pius IX.

Great in consequence were the anxieties and hopes of the whole Liberal party in Italy when the death of the reigning Pontiff occurred. The cardinals assembled on the 14th June to elect a successor, and such was the anxiety of the crowds which thronged the doors, that it was painted on their very visages, and in the waving to and fro which always takes place when a multitude are strongly agitated. At length, on the morning of the 17th, the doors were thrown open, and from the balconies of the Quirinal the name of Cardinal Mastai was proclaimed as the new Pope, under the title of Pius IX. Joy was painted on every visage; mutual felicitations were universal among the assembled multitude. The character of the new Pontiff, which was known to be deeply tinged with Liberalism, inspired the most ardent hopes among that party, numerous especially in the great towns and among the highly educated classes, who were deeply impressed with the innumerable social evils of their country, and looked forward to a course of liberal measures, conducing to the bewitching dream of Italian unity, as the only possible means of terminating them. The first act of the new Pontiff sufficiently evinced the

June 17.

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

interest which had put him on the throne. He called the French ambassador, M. Rossi, to his side, and shaking him affectionately by the hand, addressed to him the most cordial words, expressive of his gratitude and confidence. Who could have foreseen that within two years M. Rossi was to fall a bleeding corpse on the steps of the throne which he had now so large a share in establishing?[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 187, 189; Ann. Hist. xxix. 439, 440.

63. State of Italian opinion at this time.

Italy at this period was profoundly moved, not merely by the efforts of the Carbonari and other secret societies which had so long laboured in its bosom, but by the general opinion of all the intelligent classes. Like France in 1789, it had arrived at one of those phases in national existence, when society, from a combination of causes, is in a manner precipitated into revolution. Like it, too, the direction of public thought by literary men had a large share in producing this effect. The works of the Comte di Balbo, of the Marquis d'Azeglio, and of the Abbé Giberti, which appeared from 1840 to 1846, had a large share in producing this effect. None but those who lived in Italy during those years can conceive how great was the sensation which they produced. The reason was, that they fell upon the public mind with the charm of novelty, combined with a large intermixture of truth. Asserting not less strenuously than the extreme revolutionists the necessity of an entire change in Italy, drawing no veil over its innumerable political and social evils, they inculcated an entirely different course of action to remove them. So far from preaching eternal war against those in authority, and combination to overthrow them by every means in their power, they recommended order, peace, and tranquillity, the reformation of abuses by the gentle methods of peace and persuasion, and a cordial concord between sovereigns and their subjects, to effect these objects, from a sense of the advantages they would confer on both. These doctrines, so easy to inculcate, so hard to practise in a world of selfishness, spread the

more readily among the educated and respectable classes, that they divested, in appearance, political change of all its terrors, and made a constant appeal to the generous and benevolent, instead of the angry and selfish passions. The immense influence of these doctrines, as of the similar ones which were so general in the years immediately preceding the French Revolution, must be regarded as one great cause of the general assent which Liberal opinions obtained at this period in all parts of the Italian peninsula.[1]

[1] Delle Speranze d'Italia, c. vi.; Massimo d'Azeglio, c. vii.

64. Character of Pius IX.

The character of the Pontiff who, at this critical juncture, was called to fill the chair of St Peter, was peculiarly calculated to foster these principles and encourage these hopes. Resembling the unhappy French monarch in many salient points of his character, he was the Louis XVI. of the Italian Revolution. Mild and affectionate in disposition, averse to violence, having a horror of blood, he aspired only to make himself loved, and he thought that all the objects of social reform might be attained by this blessed influence. He saw before him, in bright perspective, a pacific extirpation of abuses, unstained by blood, unmoistened by tears. His information, both in regard to his own and the neighbouring countries, was very considerable; and he was animated with a sincere desire to bring up Italy by pacific means to a level with those countries which had recently so much outstripped it in liberty, literature, and social progress. Unfortunately, like his predecessor in France, he wanted one quality which rendered all the rest of no avail, or rather rendered them the instruments of evil. He was destitute of firmness, and, like most ecclesiastics, had no practical acquaintance with mankind. He thought he would succeed in ruling men, and directing the social movement, which he saw was inevitable, by appealing only to the humane and generous feelings, forgetting that the violent and selfish are incessantly acting, and that unless they are firmly restrained, the movement will soon be perverted to the objects of

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

rapine and spoliation. Experience soon taught him this; and in consequence he was forced into the arms of the other party, became the opponent of progress, and acquired the character of vacillation and inconsistency. Kind and benevolent, but weak and inexperienced, he was the man of all others best fitted to inaugurate, and least to direct or restrain a revolution.

65. General amnesty, and transports with which it was received. July 16, 1846.

The first important act of the new Pontiff was one eminently popular, and calculated, with reason, to win for him the affectionate suffrages of all classes of his subjects. In common with other Italian states, there were at his accession a great number of persons either convicted of, or charged with, political offences, who were in confinement or banished from Rome. Their relations and friends were naturally extremely anxious to obtain an amnesty for these unhappy persons, many of whom were highly connected, and the most enlightened and generous persons in the State. It was universally felt, accordingly, that a general amnesty would be the most popular step that could possibly be adopted by the new Pontiff; and at his accession Cardinal Ferretti, one of his most intimate friends, said to the French ambassador, "Be not afraid, M. l'Ambassadeur; we shall soon have the amnesty and railways, and all will go well." Yielding alike to his own inclination and the general wish, Pius IX. proclaimed the amnesty, and the joyous news was early on the morning of the 16th July placarded all over Rome. No words can paint the transports which ensued. The prison doors were opened; their country was restored to fifteen hundred captives or exiles. From morning to night crowds of all ranks and professions hastened to the Quirinal to express to the holy father the unbounded joy which the act of mercy had diffused. Twice in the space of a few hours the Pope gave his blessing to successive multitudes which filled the place, and on their knees received the sacred benediction;[1] and as a third crowd arrived from the more distant parts of the city, he came out, contrary to

[1] M. Rossi à M. Guizot, July 18, 1846; D'Haussonville, ii. 201, 202; Regnault, iii. 309; Ann. Hist. xxix. 439, 440.

etiquette, after nightfall, and by torchlight again bestowed it amidst tears of joy. A spontaneous illumination lighted up the whole city.

66. First acts of the Pope.

The general hopes which were thus awakened were not damped by the first administrative acts of the new Pontiff. He found it no easy matter, however, to withstand the innumerable applications for offices, pensions, or succour of some sort, with which he was assailed by the partisans of the new Liberal regime with which he was now identified, or those who represented themselves as having been sufferers under the old. The limited and embarrassed finances of the Holy See afforded but scanty means of satisfying the avidity of the Liberals of all Italy, who at once fell as a burden upon them. Great numbers, accordingly, were disappointed; their murmurs were loud and long; and before many months had elapsed, the popularity of the Pontiff decreased, and when he appeared in public, on the 7th November, in the Church of St Charles Borromeo, he was coldly received by the multitude. Deeply affected with this change from the universal transports of his accession, the Pope hastened to adopt some measures calculated to restore his popularity; and on the following day a commission was issued, composed of prelates and laymen, to report on the reform required in the criminal procedure, on the amelioration of the municipal system, and on the repression of vagrant mendicity. This for a time renewed his popularity, which was still farther increased by various decrees which were shortly after issued for the establishment of primary schools, agricultural institutions, hospitals for the poor, and the reorganisation of the army, and of the ancient and far-famed University of Bologna.[1]

Nov. 7.

Nov. 8.

Dec. 2.

Dec. 11.

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 205, 207; Regnault, iii. 309; Ann. Hist. xxix. 440, 441.

67. Difficulties which beset the Papal Government.

So far the progress of the new Pontiff had been all on flowers, but the thorns were not long in showing themselves. He soon learned the fatal truth which experience never fails, sooner or later, to teach all who are concerned in the government of men, that you cannot rule them by a mere

CHAP. XLVI. 1846.

appeal to the virtuous or generous affections, but that durable authority must be based on the co-operation for their own sakes of the selfish. The holy father speedily found himself beset with a double set of retainers or applicants, the one striving to retain the offices and emoluments which had descended to them as so many appanages from the old aristocratic regime, the other to appropriate them entirely to themselves, as the heirs or expectants of the new Liberal. The persons in possession of power, for the most part, belonged to the former class. The principles which the Government professed, and which were indispensable to preserve for it its new-born popularity, were those of the latter. Hence a constant jarring between the professions of those in authority and their actions—the machine was worked by unwilling agents. The difficulties inseparable, even in the best and firmest hands, from such a transition state, were much enhanced by the personal character of the Pope, who yielded alternately to the solicitations of these opposite parties, and deprived Government of all real consideration by taking from it all character of consistency.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 207, 209; Regnault, iii. 310, 311; Ann. Hist. xxix. 440, 441.

68. Which are increased by the general concourse of Liberals to Rome.

The dangers of such a state of things were much enhanced in the close of 1846, by the great confluence of refugees, who, taking advantage of the amnesty, flocked to Rome, and brought with them not only the liberalism of their own country, but the concentrated spirit of revolution from all other states. The Eternal City became the headquarters of the movement from all parts of Europe. Liberals from France, Spain, Poland, Germany, the Austrian states—all flocked thither, as at once an asylum from the persecution of the Governments which they had offended, and a central point from which they could renew their machinations for ulterior and still more extensive revolutionary aggressions. No practical or useful reforms by the Papal Government could keep pace with the heated imaginations or selfish designs of this band of enthusiasts. They openly aspired, not merely to reform the Holy See,

but to subvert the Government in all the adjoining states, and realise the dream of an united Italian Republic, one and indivisible, at the head of which they themselves were to be, and of which their partisans over Europe were to reap the whole advantages and emoluments. The French ambassador, M. Rossi, who well knew how intense was the hatred which this party bore to his royal master, did his utmost to withstand these dangerous tendencies, and limit the reforms to those of a practical and useful kind; but this only augmented the danger, for it at once brought the British diplomatic agents to the other side. Lord Palmerston, whose ruling passion was to augment the diplomatic influence of his country, and whose political position at home led him to deem the advancement of Liberal opinions, and the establishment of Liberal institutions, in all other countries, the most effectual means to attain that object, was naturally led to espouse the opposite set of principles; and hence an immediate divergence between the Ministers of the two states, attended with the utmost danger to the peace and ultimate interests of Europe.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 310,311; D'Haussonville, ii. 207, 208; M. Rossi à M. Guizot, Dec. 18, 1846—Ibid.

69. Adoption of the same policy in the Grand-duchy of Tuscany.

Allured, however, by the brilliant results which, in the first instance, had attended the adoption of a Liberal policy in the Ecclesiastical States, several of the temporal princes of Italy embarked with sincere goodwill in the same cause. Leopold, Grand-duke of Tuscany, was the first to adventure on the inviting but perilous path. That beautiful duchy had long been more lightly and equably governed than any of the other Italian states, and it embraced a greater number of highly educated and enlightened persons. To them a certain intervention in the affairs of Government had long been the subject of desire, and the moderation of their temperament, and extent of their information, pointed them out as peculiarly fitted for this enjoyment. Their aspirations were now in a great measure realised. Leopold, of his own free-will, in a great degree emancipated the press from its shackles, and

CHAP. XLVI.

1846.

Dec. 3. adopted other reforms which were still more acceptable to his subjects. Two decrees were issued on the 3d December, the first of which appointed a commission to inquire into the best modes of extending the primary education of all classes of the people; while the second established Normal schools for the instruction of teachers in connection with the University of Pisa, which had been reorganised two years before on the most liberal footing by an ordinance of the Government. A decree of 13th

Nov. 13. November augmented by 33 per cent the duties on vessels entering the Tuscan harbours, subject to a proportional reduction on vessels belonging to the countries with which Tuscany had concluded reciprocity treaties. This evident approach to the principles of Free Trade, which at the same period were embraced in England, diffused universal satisfaction, and encouraged the hope that the Government would be practically as well as theoretically established on the most Liberal principles.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 223; Regnault, iii. 310, 311; Ann. Hist xxix. 445, 446.

70. Movements in Sardinia and Piedmont.

Sardinia also shared in the same movement. Charles Albert, who in early youth had fought by their side in 1823, was too clear-sighted not to perceive that it was in that party alone that he could find the support requisite to realise his favourite project of turning the Austrians out of Italy. To conciliate them, accordingly, during the general ferment of men's minds in Italy consequent on the amnesty and reform of Pius IX., he commenced some changes, and promised more. A project for the general organisation of schools of law was prepared by the learned labour of the Marquis Alfieri, Count Selopis, and the Abbé Peyron, and a warm war of tariffs on wines and other articles imported from the Milanese into Piedmont, or *vice versâ*, betrayed the secret animosity of the cabinets of Vienna and Turin.[2] Regarding the kingdom of Sardinia as the power which could alone in the peninsula face the Austrian bayonets, and which must necessarily take the lead in any efforts to assert the independence of Italy, these angry symptoms excited the

[2] D'Haussonville, ii. 226, 228; Regnault, iii. 311, 312; Ann. Hist. xxix. 442, 443.

utmost interest in the inhabitants of the whole peninsula, and the hopes that had been excited by the general enthusiasm, and the direction it was taking, were clearly evinced by what occurred in the beginning of winter. On a given night in December, bale-fires were simultaneously lighted on the principal heights of the Apennines, which reflected the ruddy glow from the mountains of Bologna to the extreme point of the Calabrian peninsula. Dec. 9.

71. Papal declaration against Liberalism. June 12. June 22.

Two important State papers were soon after issued by the Court of Rome, and a revolutionary movement took place in that city, which too clearly prognosticated the commotions which were approaching. On the 12th June a "*Motu Proprio*" appeared, which was soon after followed by a more detailed exposition of the views of the Papal Government. In these State papers, his Holiness, while professing, in the strongest terms, his determination to proceed in the path of moderate practical reform on which he had entered, declared his intention to preserve unchanged the system of government and the institutions which were essential to its maintenance. "The holy father," said he, "has in consequence not beheld without grief the doctrines and the attempts of some excited persons, who aim at introducing into the measures of government maxims subversive of the elevated and pacific character of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and to awaken in the people ideas and hopes inconsistent with the pontifical government." These decided words were a mortal stroke to the exalted Liberals; they immediately lost all confidence in the Pope, who, they declared, had fallen entirely under the Austrian influence; and to the enthusiastic transports which had signalised his accession a year before, succeeded a cold indifference.[1]

1 D'Haussonville, ii. 213, 215; Motu Prop. June 12; Decree, June 22, 1847.

72. Revolutionary movement in Rome. July 16.

Matters were in this agitated state, and the minds of men inflamed by hope or fear, according to the party to which they belonged, when the 16th July, the anniversary of the publication of the amnesty in the preceding year, came round. This day, fraught with such hopes and

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

recollections, was looked forward to with as much dread by the quiet citizens as it was with hope by the turbulent and ambitious. On the evening before, when preparations were making for the approaching solemnity, an agitation was observed among the crowd, the usual and well-known precursor of civil commotions; and written placards, posted on the walls, announced that the retrograde faction was about to take advantage of the approaching fête to provoke a bloody strife between the people and the pontifical troops. They even went so far as to denounce Cardinal Lambuschini and the governor of the city as at the head of the bloody conspiracy. The agitation was soon excessive in Rome. Boldly interposing between what they deemed the two contending factions, the chief nobles of Rome, the heads of the houses of Rospigliosi, Rignaro, Borghese, Aldobrandini, Piombini, opened the vast courts of their palaces to their retainers, and suddenly, without any authority from Government, organised a sort of civic guard, adequate to the preservation of the public peace, and the calming the apprehensions of the people. A petition, signed by several thousands of the most respectable inhabitants, was hastily got up, praying the Pope to postpone the fête, which was accordingly done. The persons designed for public vengeance, as the chiefs of the counter-revolution, sought refuge under the protection of the Civic Guard, by which alone their lives were saved. The police and military were entirely superseded; all power was vested in the leaders of the civic guard; and for the next ten days Rome was, literally speaking, without a government.

73. Measures of the Austrian and French cabinets.

Attentive observers of what was passing in Italy, the French and Austrian governments respectively endeavoured to turn the effervescence to the best account for the interests of their different empires. Their objects, however, were different. The principal aim of M. Guizot and his representative at the Court of Rome, M. Rossi, was to keep the Pope firm, but temperate, in the course

which he had adopted, to prevent him either from relapsing to dogged resistance to reform, or precipitating a disastrous revolution. Metternich and the Cabinet of Vienna gave themselves very little trouble about the regulation of a movement which they were determined entirely to resist; but applied themselves sedulously to watch any proceedings in the adjoining states of the peninsula which threatened their own influence or possessions. In pursuance of this policy, they no sooner perceived, from the tenor of their advices from Rome, that the exalted Liberals there were organising a general movement of all the states in the peninsula, having for its object to extinguish the tramontane influence, than they made a movement professedly to support the government of the Pope, really to terminate the ascendancy of the Liberals in his councils, which threatened to prove so dangerous to the peace of Italy. By the 63d article of the Treaty of Vienna, the Austrians were authorised to keep a garrison in the citadel of Ferrara; but the custody of the gates of the town was still intrusted to the pontifical troops. Now, however, a more decided demonstration was deemed necessary. On the 10th August, a division of Austrian troops crossed the Po, and took entire possession of the fortress, threatening to put to the sword whoever offered any resistance.[1]

Aug. 10.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 242, 245; Regnault, iii. 315, 316; M. Guizot à M. Rossi, 18 Juillet 1847.—Ibid.; D'Haussonville, ii. 222, 223.

74. Conduct of the French Government.

M. Rossi, who was in Rome when this extraordinary movement took place, was extremely alarmed by it; the more so that he at once foresaw that it both endangered the stability of government in the Pontifical States, and furnished a plausible pretext to the Austrians to invade and occupy the country, as one threatened with revolutionary convulsions. Without any delay he promised to the Pope the arms which were requested for the Civic Guard; and the Papal Government, assured of this support, lost no time in protesting, in the most energetic terms, against the occupation of the fortress of Ferrara by the Austrian troops. This step, and the nomin-

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

ation of Cardinal Ferretti, a moderate Liberal, contributed powerfully to calm the public mind; and the general feeling underwent a change attended with important effects. The holy father was no longer regarded as the head of the revolutionary, but of the national party; and to the cry of "Long live Reform!" succeeded the still more thrilling one of "Italian Independence!" The latter soon spread beyond the Roman States; it came to animate all the states of the peninsula; and embraced numbers of the higher and educated classes, who, albeit not less opposed than M. Guizot to organic changes in the form of government, were yet passionately desirous of emancipating the country from the degrading state of tutelage in which it had so long been kept to the Northern Powers.[1]

[1] M. Guizot à M. Rossi, July 28, 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 220, 221.

75. Effects in Piedmont.

This change in the temper of the public mind in the Italian peninsula was attended with important effects in Piedmont. The inhabitants of Turin were comparatively indifferent to the general movement, as long as it related to internal reforms; for the passion of the nation was essentially military and warlike, not domestic or republican. But no sooner did the "Independence of Italy" become the cry, than a general enthusiasm seized all classes, and not more the humbler than the noble and educated. This anxiety of the public mind soon became almost unbearable; the people could hardly be hindered from taking up arms and enrolling themselves in battalions of volunteers; and it was repeated with enthusiasm that Charles Albert had expressed himself warmly on the subject of the Austrian occupation of Ferrara, and let drop hints that the time was not far distant when he would draw his sword for the "Sacred cause of Italian Independence."[2]

[2] D'Haussonville, ii. 229, 231; Regnault, iii. 312, 313.

76. Prince Metternich's views at this crisis.

At this critical juncture Prince Metternich addressed a letter in the following terms to M. Appony, his minister at Paris, which was officially communicated to the French Government: "I have no doubt of the good intentions

of the holy father; but has he the means of carrying them into effect? The revolutionists, the evil designing, are at his side to take advantage of the reforms he has introduced, which are good in themselves, and of which Austria has shown her approval by having recommended them herself in 1831. Is it not evident that they intend to lead him farther than he intends; and has he the means of preventing himself from being dragged along? Does his position, as head of the Christian Church, leave him at liberty to adopt the means which any temporal prince would at once have recourse to, in order to maintain his power of self-direction? It is next to certain that it does not. Let him not surrender himself to the guidance of the Giobertis and the Lamenais, who tender to him the support of the 'Catholic Democracy.' There never was such a fatal mistake. Strength derived from such a quarter is nothing but weakness. Should the Pope throw himself into the arms of that party, he will expose Europe to the most serious dangers." [1]

[1] M. Metternich à M. Appony, Aug. 28, 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 231.

77. M. Guizot's policy as to Italy at this period.

M. Guizot's policy at this period was directed to the double object of preventing an explosion of revolutionary violence in Italy, and of taking away all pretext for Austrian interference. Above all things he was anxious to check the growth of the passion for unity and independence in the peninsula, which he was well aware, however seductive in appearance, would inevitably light up the flames of a European war, fatal in the end to all the dreams of Italian patriotism.* He saw that it was not possible to keep the people long in a state of effervescence without inducing the most serious disorders; his system was to "press the Pope and to

* "Ou l'Autriche veut intervenir en Italie, et alors il ne faut pas lui en fournir le prétexte, ou elle ne le veut pas, et alors il faut laisser le Pape arranger ces affaires à l'aimable. Le Pape est maître d'arranger cette affaire purement avec l'Autriche, ou de demander la médiation d'une puissance, la France, ou de deux puissances, la France et l'Angleterre, ou des puissances signataires des Traités de Vienne. Tous ces moyens nous conviennent. Il faut se garder en Italie de fonder des espérances sur une conflagration Européenne. Cette illusion a déjà perdu, et peut perdre, la cause Italienne. Que chacun fasse ses affaires

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

restrain the enthusiasts." His ideas were well portrayed in a private letter to M. Rossi on 27th September: "Our policy in regard to Rome and Italy, whatever our enemies may say, is so clear and simple, that it is impossible it can be long misunderstood. What does the Pope desire? It is to be on good terms with his subjects; to stop, by legitimate satisfactions, the fermentation which is consuming them, and to regain for the Church and religion, in modern society, the place which belongs to them. We entirely approve of these designs. We believe them to be advantageous alike for Italy and France, for the King at Paris as the Pope at Rome. We are desirous to second the Pope in his designs. What are the dangers which threaten him? The stationary danger and the revolutionary danger. There are some around him, as elsewhere in Europe, who would do nothing but leave matters exactly as they are. There are others around him, as elsewhere in Europe, who would overturn everything, who desire that he should alter everything at the risk of being overthrown himself, as those who urge him to adopt this course in secret desire. We wish to assist the Pope in defending himself from this double danger, and if necessary to aid him in his defence. We are neither entirely stationary, nor entirely revolutionists, neither at Rome nor in France. We know by our own experience that there are social wants which must be satisfied, progress which must be admitted, and that the greatest interest of a government is to be on good terms with its people and the times. We know by our own experience that the revolutionary spirit is the enemy of all governments, the moderate as well as the absolute, of those who admit some progress

à part; les Romains à Rome, les Toscans en Toscane, les Napolitains à Naples, et le succès est alors possible. *En dehors du respect des traités existants, il n'y a pas de succès possible.* Le triomphe des réformes partielles dans chaque état amène plus tard le triomphe de la cause nationale—y viser aujourd'hui c'est viser à une Révolution en Italie, et risquer une conflagration générale."—M. GUIZOT à M. ROSSI, 17th September 1847; D' HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 232, 233.

as of those who resist all, and that the first duty of a sane government, which would exist, is to resist the revolutionary spirit. This is the policy of the *juste milieu*, as it is of good sense and experience, which we practise ourselves and counsel to the Pope, and who has much need of it, as we have. We *are at peace and on good terms with Austria, and we wish to continue on such*; for a war with Austria is a general war and universal revolution. We know that the Austrian Government is one of good sense, capable of conducting itself with moderation, and of yielding to obvious necessity."[1]

[1] M. Guizot à M. Rossi, Sept. 27, 1847; Moniteur, Jan. 13, 1848.

78. Policy of the English Government at the same time.

This able letter, produced before the Chamber of Peers on occasion of the debate on the Address on 13th January 1848, could hardly be gainsaid by either party at Paris, and accordingly it cut short all discussion in that quarter. Unfortunately at this period the English Government, though professing the same principles, was not equally cautious in its measures, and the pernicious effects of the division on the Spanish marriages became now painfully conspicuous. Equally impressed as M. Guizot with the gravity and importance of the crisis in Italy, the British Cabinet resolved to send out a confidential diplomatic agent to examine the state of the peninsula, and give such counsel to its various governments as might best tend to bring them in safety through the dangers by which they were surrounded.* Lord Minto was selected for that

* "You will say that her Majesty's Government have learned with no less surprise than regret the official communication which has lately been made by the Austrian minister at Turin to the Sardinian Government, and which seems to imply a threat that the Sardinian territory would be entered by Austrian troops if the King of Sardinia should, in the exercise of his undoubted rights of sovereignty, make certain organic arrangements within his own dominions which would be displeasing to the Government of Austria. Her Majesty's Government cannot believe that the Government of Austria can seriously contemplate a proceeding which would be so flagrant a violation of international law, and for which no excuse of any kind can be alleged. The King of Sardinia will doubtless pursue, in regard to these affairs, that course which is befitting his dignity and rights; and while on the one hand he will not be deterred by such menaces from adopting any measures within his own dominions which he may think useful and right, he will on the other hand not suffer any feelings of natural irritation which such communications may have produced,

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

purpose, and no man could, from his character and qualifications, have been better qualified for the duties of his mission. Nevertheless the mission itself proved in its results most calamitous, and it is to be regarded as one of

to impel him into any steps which might wear the appearance of unnecessary military defiance.

"You will be at Rome, not as a minister accredited to the Pope, which the present law of England does not permit, but as an authentic organ of the British Government, enabled to explain its views and declare its sentiments upon events which are now passing in Italy, and which, both from their local importance and their bearing on the general interests of Europe, her Majesty's Government are watching with great interest and anxiety. Her Majesty's Government are deeply impressed with the conviction that it is wise for sovereigns and their governments to pursue, in the administration of their affairs, a system of progressive improvement; to apply remedies to such evils as, upon examination, they may find to exist; and to remodel, from time to time, the ancient institutions of their country, so as to render them suitable to the gradual growth of intelligence, and to the increasing diffusion of political knowledge. And her Majesty's Government consider it to be an undeniable truth, that if an independent sovereign, in the exercise of his deliberate judgment, shall think fit to make, within his dominions, such improvements in the laws and institutions of his country as he may think conducive to the welfare of his people, no other government can have any right to attempt to restrain or to interfere with such an employment of one of the inherent rights of independent sovereignty.

"The present Pope has begun to enter upon a system of administrative improvement in his dominions; and it appears to her Majesty's Government that his proceedings in these matters are, upon general principles, highly praiseworthy, and worthy of encouragement from all who take an interest in the welfare of the people of Italy. But in 1831 and 1832, a particular combination of circumstances induced the governments of Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia and Russia, to advise the then reigning Pope to make great changes and improvements, both administrative and organic, in his dominions; and this was strongly pressed upon the Roman Government by Count Lutzow, the Austrian minister, in name of the five Powers. These representations, however, produced no effect, and were put by, unattended to by the Government of the late Pope. Her Majesty's Government have not learned that as yet the reforms and improvements effected by the present Pope have reached the full extent of what was recommended in the Memorandum of 1832; and her Majesty's Government conceive that all the Powers who were parties to the framing of that Memorandum are bound to encourage and assist the Pope in carrying out to their full extent these recommendations. Such a course the British Government, at all events, is prepared to pursue."—VISCOUNT PALMERSTON to EARL OF MINTO, *Sept.* 18, 1847, No. 123; *Blue-Book regarding Italy*, July, 1849.

"When I had finished reading to M. Guizot the first despatch on the affairs of the Italian peninsula, his Excellency at once stated, that upon the two points there treated—each state independent in its established limits, and the perfect liberty of each sovereign to undertake any reform he pleased—he was perfectly agreed with your lordship, and had already written a despatch in an analogous sense."—LORD NORMANBY to LORD PALMERSTON, Sept. 17, 1847, No. 124; *Ibid.*

the main causes of the revolution which so soon after broke out in the Italian peninsula. He himself was generally discreet and measured in his language; but his followers were not equally cautious: and as it was well known that the French Government, under the direction of M. Guizot, was strongly inclined to the conservative or resistance policy, the Liberal party were everywhere careful to represent England as at the head of the movement, and Lord Minto as the *avant-courier* who was sent by the English Cabinet to prepare the Italian states for the completion of their settled designs for the independence of Italy. The express words of the British legate did not countenance this belief; but the fact of a member of the Cabinet having been sent at such a crisis, on such a mission, gave it universal currency. Lord Minto was universally regarded as the champion of Italian independence; tumults and turbulent manifestations of popular feeling preceded or followed him wherever he went; Turin, Genoa, Florence, Rome, Naples, Sicily, had no sooner hailed his arrival than they became violently agitated; and at Milan, where the popular passions, still more vehement, were restrained by Austrian bayonets, the people broke out into open riot amidst cries of "Down with the Austrians!" which were only repressed after collision and bloodshed.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 249; Ann. Reg. 1847, 394; Regnault, iii. 347, 348.

79. Great reforms introduced into Piedmont. Oct. 30.

Such was the agitation which prevailed upon the first arrival of the English envoy at Turin, that the Government had no alternative but to yield to it. On the 30th October a programme appeared in the official Gazette of Turin, which announced the changes which the Government were about to introduce into the internal administration of the kingdom. These were, the publicity of criminal trials, and the publication of the debates; the establishment of an entirely new system of municipal administration, with mayors and magistrates elected by the people; the convocation, at least once a-year, of extraordinary councillors; the creation of civil registers

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

in parishes by persons chosen by the people, in addition to those heretofore exclusively kept by the clergy; and a material relaxation of the rigour of the censorship of the press. These concessions, which were precisely those which the Liberal party had long demanded, were not only important in themselves, but still more so by the hopes of further concessions which they awakened. They produced, accordingly, universal transports; the popularity of Charles Albert equalled that which Pius IX. had enjoyed a year before; the whole capital was spontaneously illuminated for several nights; he could not leave his palace without being surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd; and when later in the autumn he set out for Genoa, the greater part of the inhabitants of both cities attended him with joyous acclamations, both on his departure and return. Nor did the acts of Charles Albert belie these flattering appearances; for he communicated at this time to the French Government his resolution, in the event of the Pope requiring his assistance against the Austrians, not to refuse his armed support.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 251, 252; Ann. Reg. 1847, 395; Regnault, iii. 317.

80. Revolution at Lucca, and its annexation to Tuscany. Aug. 31, 1847.

More vehement still was the demonstration in favour of Liberal opinions and Italian independence in Lucca. The duke of that beautiful little duchy had caused several persons to be prosecuted for political offences in the course of August; and on the 31st August a tumult arose in the town in consequence of a demand made by a determined band of young men for the liberation of the prisoners. The duke was at the time absent at San Martino, in Vignola; and the Government having no force at their disposal to quell the tumult, sent a deputation to him to request instructions how to act. Terrified at what had occurred, the duke next day sent them back with a proclamation, in which he promised them a national guard, and the establishment of all the reforms which had given so much satisfaction in Tuscany. Repenting, however, almost immediately after he had taken it, of this step, the duke fled to Massa, in the Modena

Sept. 1.

territory. The announcement of this step excited the utmost disquietude in Lucca, where crowds immediately assembled, and paraded the streets in a menacing manner, demanding a constitution, and the return of their sovereign, when, in the midst of the tumult, the duke reappeared, accompanied by the hereditary prince, and was received with acclamation. Distrusting, however, his ability to govern a people in such a state of excitement, the duke soon after entered into an arrangement with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, by which, in consideration of an annuity of £48,000 a-year, he agreed to cede to him the entire duchy, to be paid until the duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla, settled upon the former by the treaties of Vienna, descended to him on the demise of their present ruler, the Archduchess Maria-Louisa. This arrangement was immediately carried into effect, to the infinite joy of the inhabitants of both the duchies, now happily united.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxix. 314, 318; Ann. Reg. 1847, 308, 309.

81. Enthusiasm excited at Rome by Lord Minto's arrival.

It was in the midst of the effervescence caused by these events that Lord Minto arrived at Rome. Unbounded was the enthusiasm which his arrival excited. It was to his influence, and that of the Cabinet which he represented, that the auspicious change which had recently taken place in the external and internal policy of the Sardinian Government was to be ascribed. Not a doubt was entertained that he came as the accredited organ of the British Government, to promote the establishment of social reforms and foreign independence. Every one congratulated himself that Italy had at last found a protector capable of making its rights respected, and that the support which was awanting in Paris would now be found in London. France was by common consent passed by, as having cast in its lot with the oppressor. Under the impulse of these ideas, it was resolved to celebrate the arrival of Lord Minto by one of those magnificent *demonstrazione en piazza* which the Italians know so well how to conduct in their beautiful

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

evenings. In effect, a few days after his arrival a vast crowd, which assembled in the Corso, suddenly entered the *Piazza de Spagna*, and soon filled the inner court of the Hotel Melza, where Lord Minto resided. Cries of "Long live Lord Minto!" "Long live Italian Independence!" were heard on all sides. White handkerchiefs were seen to wave in reply from the windows of the hotel. The agitated crowds would not pause to inquire whether it was the British envoy or some of his suite who waved the handkerchiefs. The thing was done, and done at the Hotel of Great Britain, no matter by whom. It augmented immensely the general enthusiasm; the Radical journals in France immediately published an inflated account of the event, accompanied by a statement that England had openly put itself at the head of the league for promoting Italian independence; and the appearance of some leading Liberals in Lord Minto's box at the opera a few nights after, when they were received with thunders of applause, dispelled all doubt in the minds of the Liberals of the truth of the report.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 254, 257; Ann. Hist. xxx. 274, 280.

82. M. Rossi's warning remarks to the Pope and the Radicals.

Seriously alarmed at the turn which affairs were taking, which threatened not only a revolutionary convulsion in Italy, but the lighting up of a general conflagration in Europe, M. Rossi, in several conferences with the Pope, endeavoured to convince his Holiness of the necessity of admitting some *laymen* into his Cabinet, as the ecclesiastics, of whom it was as yet exclusively composed, were quite inadequate to guide the vessel of the State through the stormy scenes which were approaching. So obvious was the necessity, that the Austrians themselves, in 1831, had given the same counsel.* After considerable difficulty, M. Rossi succeeded in extorting

* "J'ai insisté vivement pour que dans le prochain *Motu Proprio* qui doit étendre et perfectionner les conseils des Ministres, on fasse une part aux laïques. C'est à mes yeux le nœud de la question. En ralliant ainsi les Modérés autour du Gouvernement, on gagnerait la garde civique; on aurait un moyen d'action agréable et accepté sur la réforme, et l'on isolerait les Radicaux." —M. Rossi à M. Guizot, 18th December 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 258.

this concession from the monopolising ecclesiastics, and several lay councillors were admitted into the Cabinet. At the same time he used his utmost endeavours to point out to the extreme Liberals the danger which they were incurring, not only for their country, but for Europe, by rushing headlong into a war with Austria, with the feeble warlike elements which were alone at their disposal. "What do you propose to yourselves," said he, "by your incessant provocations against Austria? It is not threatening you; it confines itself to the limits which the treaties have assigned. It is a war of independence which you would invoke. Be it so; let us calculate your forces—you have 60,000 regular troops in Piedmont, and not a man more. You speak of the enthusiasm of the Italian populations; I know them. Traverse them from end to end; see if a heart beats, if a man moves, if an arm is ready to commence the fight. The Piedmontese once beaten, the Austrians may go from Reggio to Calabria without meeting a single Italian. I understand you; you will apply to France. A fine result truly of the war of independence, to bring the foreign armies again upon your soil! The Austrians and the French fighting on the Italian soil! Is not that your eternal, your lamentable history? You would be independent; we are so already. France is not a corporal in the service of Italy. She makes war, when and for whom she pleases. She neither puts her standards nor her battalions at the disposal of any one else." [1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 261, 268.

83. Riot in Rome. Jan. 1, 1848.

The times were past, however, when these emphatic warnings, which the event proved to be entirely well-founded, could produce any effect. The train had been laid, the torch applied, and the explosion was inevitable. Power had changed hands at Rome. It had slipped from the feeble grasp of the Pope and the Cardinals, and been seized by the hands of violent men, destitute alike of information or prudence. Hardly a day passed without

CHAP. XLVI. 1848.

something occurring which demonstrated the deplorable prostration of Government, and the entire contempt into which the Pope, recently so popular, had fallen. A fête had been proposed for the first day of the new year: the Pope forbade it; a clamour was immediately raised, and he revoked his order and consented to it, and even agreed to show himself to the people. He did so, and immediately a violent crowd, uttering loud cries, surrounded the carriage; blackguard youths mounted on the steps, and one more audacious than the rest, seated himself on the box behind, and waved an enormous tricolor flag over the carriage in which the Pontiff was seated! This occurred on the very square of the Quirinal, where, eighteen months before, he had been almost adored by the grateful multitude on their knees! "As yet," said M. Rossi, in recounting the scene to M. Guizot, "it is only a storm in a tea-cup; Turin and Naples are its sides; but *if those sides should break, we may tremble for the whole world.*"[1]

[1] M. Rossi à M. Guizot, Jan. 5, 1848; D'Haussonville, ii. 261, 262.

84. Revolt in Sicily. Jan. 12, 1848.

Strange to say, it was from the Government of Naples, which passed for the most despotic country in Europe, that the impulse was first given, which blew into a flame the smouldering elements of Italian conflagration. Hitherto the King of the two Sicilies had kept aloof from the course of innovation upon which Pius IX. had entered, and viewed with undisguised alarm the changes which had been commenced in the northern states of the peninsula. Nothing whatever had been done to reform the social abuses which, in Sicily especially, were more rife than in any other country in Europe. They were there felt the more keenly that the people had been accustomed, during the long military occupation of the country by the English, in the revolutionary war, to the mildness and privileges of a constitutional government. The intelligence of the reforms of Pius IX. had in consequence excited an extraordinary enthusiasm in that isle, though few ventured to hope that any attempt to follow the example

would be made. But the event outstripped the most sanguine anticipations of the reformers. The mission of Lord Minto to the Court of Naples, whither he proceeded from Rome, did not remain long without effect. Early in December, the Duke di Serra-Capriola, ambassador of the Court of Naples at Paris, was recalled by an order from his sovereign, in order to his being sent to Sicily as lieutenant-general, with full powers to inquire into all abuses, and concede all proper reforms. The character of the duke, mild and liberal, rendered the appointment very agreeable to the Sicilians; but circumstances having retarded his arrival beyond the time which was expected, disturbances broke out at Palermo on 12th January, and an expedition sent from Naples to put it down being feebly conducted, was repulsed with loss. Upon this the Liberals in the island no longer kept up the semblance even of loyalty, but openly revolted against the government, and the insurrection ere long spread over the whole island.[1]

Jan 12, 1848.

1 D'Haussonville, ii. 267, 268: Ann. Hist. xxx. 367, 369; Ann. Reg. 1848, 398.

85. Publication of a constitution at Naples. Jan. 23, 1848.

This formidable event, and the counsels of Lord Minto, who was aware how feeble were the means of repression at the disposal of the Government of Naples, and who saw no escape from the danger which threatened them in their continental dominions but in immediate concession, terminated the indecision of the King of Naples. He resolved to outstrip all the concessions of the other Italian sovereigns, and appease the general effervescence by the publication of a constitution. He was fearful, not without reason, of a repetition of the Revolution of 1821. The ministers known to be hostile to reform were removed from the Cabinet, and on 18th January a decree appeared, which gave large additional powers to the deliberative assemblies of Naples and Sicily. The Comte d'Aquila, the king's brother, was appointed Lieutenant-general in Sicily, with a special cabinet to assist him in his deliberations.[2] On the day following, a decree removed nearly all the restrictions on the liberty of the

Jan. 18.
Jan. 19.

2 D'Haussonville, ii. 267, 269; Ann. Reg. 1848, 399, 401; Ann. Hist. xxx. 369, 371.

CHAP. XLVI. 1848.

press, and declared a large amnesty for political offenders. On the 23d the king announced to his astonished subjects the elements of a constitution; on the 27th a new Cabinet was formed, with the Duke di Serra-Capriola at its head, and the Prince di Cassaro and Prince Torrilla, all known to hold Liberal opinions, forming part of it; and on the 29th, the long-wished-for constitution was officially published.

Jan. 23. Jan. 27.

86. Great sensation produced by this change in Italy.

It is difficult for a stranger, especially in a free country to the north of the Alps, to form a conception of the sensation which these decrees, following each other in rapid succession, and all breathing so liberal a spirit, produced in Italy. It was the greater from these concessions to the popular cause coming from the Sovereign and the Court known to be most conservative in their policy, and most adverse to political change of any kind. The Liberals were everywhere in transports. It seemed impossible that the antiquated fabric of superstition and despotism could any longer be maintained in the peninsula, when the most absolute monarch within its bounds was the first to put forth his hand to put it down. The Cabinets in the centre and northern parts of the peninsula were thunderstruck at the intelligence; but ere long the enthusiasm became so general, the torrent so powerful, that they saw no chance of escape but in yielding to it. Constitutions on the model of that of Naples were speedily published at Turin and Florence. In Rome, even, the extreme difficulty of reconciling the forms and popular powers of a constitutional monarchy with an absolute government based upon an exclusive theocracy, yielded to the same necessity; the Pope made some concessions to the demands of Liberalism, and promised more. In a word, Italy, save when kept down by Austrian bayonets, from the base of the Alps to the point of Calabria, was nearly as completely revolutionised, though happily as yet without the shedding of blood, as France had been by the innovations of the Constituent Assembly.[1]

Jan. 28, 1848.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 281, 284; M. Rossi à M. Guizot, Jan. 18, 1848; D'Haussonville, ii. 269, 270.

87. Convulsions in Sicily.

It was more difficult to arrange matters in a pacific way in Sicily, not only because the inhabitants of that beautiful island were smarting under the consequences of a long period of misgovernment and oppression, but because the long delay which had taken place in the Duke di Serra-Capriola's taking the command of it had engendered a general suspicion of insincerity on the part of the Government, which had driven the people into open revolt. When he did go to the seat of his government, that nobleman found affairs so threatening, and parties in such a state of mutual exasperation, that he implored the good offices of the French and English ambassadors at the Court of Naples to mediate between them. M. Montessuy, the French *Chargé d'Affaires*, who had succeeded M. Bresson, recently dead, at once accepted the office of mediator; but Lord Napier, the British representative, refused it, unless the democratic constitution of 1812 was restored, with such changes as the Estates of Sicily elected under it might demand. The King evinced great repugnance at such unlimited concessions; but Lord Napier adhered resolutely to his demand: and as M. de Montessuy spoke, if he still held out for it, of going alone, he said to him, "Set out, if you please, alone, only I give you fair warning that the same vessel which conveys you to Sicily shall carry also letters to our agents and the influential men in the country, in which I will explain why I could not accompany you. I regret being unable to join you on such a mission, but it is impossible. Everywhere else, on all the points of the globe, in China even, I could do what you ask; but in Sicily, France and England have different interests." In consequence of this declinature, Lord Napier, some days after, on the invitation of the Neapolitan Government, who saw no other mode of adjusting matters with their subjects beyond the Straits, set out alone, and M. de Bressière,[1] the new French ambassador, judged it prudent to make

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 271, 272; Ann. Hist. xxx. 302, 304; Ann. Reg. 1848, 314.

CHAP. XLVI. 1848.

arrangements to follow him, in order to prevent British influence from being altogether paramount in so large a portion of the Neapolitan dominions. He was preparing to set out, accordingly, when the Revolution at Paris intervened, and in consequence Lord Napier went alone. What followed his arrival in Sicily will form an important and melancholy subject of narrative in a future volume.

88. Credulity of Lord Palmerston to the Liberal Italian agents.

During the whole course of these important events, Lord Palmerston took his information from his agents in Italy, who were entirely in the Liberal interest; and desirous above all things to drive the passion for reform into one for independence, and to involve United Italy in a contest with despotic Austria, he went so far as to charge Austria with having been privy to a reactionary conspiracy on the 16th July—a charge which the Imperial Cabinet indignantly denied, and of which no evidence was ever adduced. The British Minister, however, insisted on the charge, even after he had been informed by the British minister at Florence, Sir George Hamilton, that the alleged conspiracy was an entire fable.* In a word, he was entirely the dupe in those matters of the Italian Revolutionists, whose great object was to run the movement in Italy into a war of independence with Austria; and for this purpose, in the words of their leader Mazzini, "*to do everything in their power to increase the hatred against the Austrians, and to irritate the Austrians by all possible means.*" This policy was pursued by Lord Palmerston, even after Prince Metternich had sent him a

July 26.

* "Milord, en réponse à la dépêche de votre Excellence du courant, qui renferme une copie de la note adressée par M. le Prince de Metternich à l'ambassadeur d'Autriche à Rome, au sujet de la conspiration récemment découverte dans cette capitale, et attribuée par le Gouvernement Pontifical aux agents de l'Autriche, j'ai à faire savoir à votre Excellence que j'apprends de sources certaines que l'opinion est générale à Rome, que les agents Autrichiens ont trempé dans le complot, et que le complot était combiné avec les mouvements militaires de la garnison de Ferrara; et telle est, je crois, l'opinion des personnes qui occupent à Rome les plus hautes positions."—LORD PALMERSTON *à* LORD PONSONBY, *son Ambassadeur à Vienne*, 27th September 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 426.

letter of Mazzini's, in which the intention of "Young Italy" to involve the peninsula in a war with Austria by any means, was avowed as plainly as words could do.* Nothing was ever more disastrous than this policy to Italy and the world, or more true than the words of Count Montalembert, uttered in the French Chamber on 16th January 1848: "If ever liberty perishes in Italy—if ever Austria regains the ascendant in Italy, which she now seems destined to lose, it will be from the efforts of the Italian Revolutionists, and from them alone. They are the real accomplices, the only and dangerous accomplices, of the Austrian power and preponderance in Italy."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 15, 1848; D'Haussonville, ii. 272, 273.

89. Affairs of Switzerland, and progress of democracy in it.

SWITZERLAND, ever since its organisation into twenty-two cantons in 1815, had remained in a state of external peace, so far as the national forces were concerned; but it was by no means equally tranquil, so far as its interior was concerned. On the contrary, no part of Europe had, during the intervening period, been more violently agitated by the revolutionary passions, nor was there any one in

* "Les affaires des Etats Pontificaux vont mal, comme vous le savez; mais la marche hésitante de celui qui gouverne ne changera pas la loi qui règle les évènements. L'impulsion est donnée, et bien ou mal, il faut avancer. Les Italiens sont de vrais enfants avec de bons instincts; *ils n'ont pas une ombre d'intelligence ou d'expérience politique.* Je parle de la multitude, et non du petit nombre de moteurs, dont le défaut est le manque de résolution. Si cependant ce petit nombre veut agir avec prudence et sans précipitation, l'illusion passera. Pie IX. est, ce qu'il m'a paru d'abord, un homme à bonnes intentions, qui voudrait que ses sujets fussent un peu mieux qu'ils n'étaient avant lui. Voilà tout. Tout le reste n'est qu'un échafaudage que les soi-disant modérés ont bâti autour de lui, comme ils en ont construit un autre autour de Charles Albert. L'illusion s'en ira peu-à-peu; mais sûrement le moment arrivera où les masses découvriront que si elles veulent devenir une nation, il faut qu'elles y travaillent elles-mêmes, et s'engagent dans des mesures *qui peuvent obliger les Autrichiens à les attaquer* avec ou sans l'assentiment des princes. Alors la collision commencera, si les Italiens ont une étincelle d'honneur et de courage. Les bons doivent se préparer pour ce moment, réunir leurs moyens d'action, acquérir de l'influence sur le peuple, laisser passer les illusions sans les contredire directement, se borner à instruire le peuple, particulièrement les paysans, à instruire les citoyens dans les armes, *à accroître de plus en plus la haine pour les Autrichiens, et à irriter l'Autriche par tous les moyens possibles.*"—M. MAZZINI *à* ———, 4th October 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 427, 428.

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

which greater and more persevering efforts had been made by the Radical faction to gain the entire and exclusive direction of affairs. The reason of this was partly the different constitutions of the different cantons, some of which, as Berne, were essentially aristocratic, while others, as Schwytz and Unterwalden, were pure democracies; and partly the divisions of the country into twenty-two cantons, so differently situated, and so detached from each other, that the central government, as in the United States of America, possessed no real power. This state of things was a continual eyesore to the extreme Liberal party, who were strong in the manufacturing towns of the Confederacy, and who conceived, not without reason, that if a more powerful central government were established, it would speedily fall into their hands, as the rulers of the seats of wealth and industry, and the distant mountain cantons be subjected to the rule of an energetic urban democracy. For this reason, the centralisation of government was the constant object of their efforts and their ambition, as the concentration of all the powers of the State in the metropolis had been of the Jacobins of Paris. But for that very reason it was the object of jealousy and apprehension to the adjoining military monarchies. Switzerland had received from the Allies the precious gift of neutrality, on condition of its remaining divided into twenty-two cantons, because while so it could be formidable to none of them. But the case would be entirely different if it became one united and centralised power, for then its mountains might become a salient redoubt of the last importance to the power which had obtained the command of its ruling influences, and equally threatening to its dispossessed rival.[1]*

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 301, 302; Ann. Hist. xxx. 449, 450.

* "'La constitution de la Suisse,' dit M. Guizot, 'a été reconnue, sanctionnée et garantie par les Gouvernements étrangers à certains conditions. Les Puissances ont conféré à la Suisse le privilège de la neutralité, et cette précieuse garantie lui a été accordée telle qu'elle est, composée de vingt-deux Etats agissant avec une égale souveraineté.'"—*Annuaire Historique*, xxx. 450.

In common with all the states of Europe, Switzerland, "that rock," in Guizot's words, "of ice and brave men," had felt the rebound of the French Revolution of 1830; and appearances were at one time so threatening after that event, that civil war was on the point of breaking out in the Confederacy. But the old influences were still strong enough to prevent that last and worst effect of popular madness; and the domestic institutions of several of the cantons were changed, and some alterations made on the conditions of the Federal Union, in 1831 and 1832, without any open convulsion. Switzerland, however, though it escaped at the time that pressing danger, received into its bosom, in consequence of that convulsion, the seeds of trouble in future times. The Revolutionists, at first triumphant, were ere long crushed at Paris by the Government of their own creation; and the refugees from France, Italy, and Germany sought refuge, as their last asylum in continental Europe, in its republican cantons. The Swiss rulers, justly jealous of their independence, though frequently urged by the Governments which were threatened by the machinations of these desperadoes to remove them, contrived to elude the demands; and France and Austria, mutually fearful of throwing so important a Confederacy into the arms of its rival, forebore to insist on the demand, or push matters to extremities. The consequence was, that Switzerland remained the secure position—from which they threatened all the adjoining States—of the revolutionists in the very centre of Europe. All the conspiracies for the next ten years which had for their object to overturn the existing government in the adjoining states were organised in Switzerland, and carried on under the very eyes of its Government. The expedition of Romorino in 1834, destined to overthrow the Sardinian Government; that of Conseil in 1836, intended to revolutionise Austria;[1] that of Louis Napoleon in 1838, designed to replace the imperial dynasty on the French

Progress of democratic influences in it.

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 303, 305; Ann. Hist. xxx. 449, 450.

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

throne, were all set on foot among the ardent democrats of the Helvetian cities.

91. Rapid growth of Radicalism in the Swiss cities.

These foreign conspiracies proved abortive; but the continual residence of the foreign Radicals in the Swiss cities ere long produced the effect which might have been anticipated upon their ambitious inhabitants. Clubs began to be formed, composed of the most ardent of the Swiss Liberals, in Zurich, Berne, Bâle, and the other principal cities of the Confederacy, in which the French, Italian, and German refugees were always the chief declaimers; and Radical newspapers were established, which conveyed their lucubrations over the whole community. The Conservatives, meanwhile, resting on hereditary influences and old traditions, and living apart from each other in the recesses of the mountains, or the solitudes of the plains, were ignorant of the danger which threatened them, and took no steps whatever to avert it. The policy of the Revolutionists was well considered, and such as, in other countries besides Switzerland, has often proved successful in overthrowing the longest-established hereditary influences. It consisted in concentrating, at successive elections, their whole efforts on particular cantons or cities where the struggle for the moment was to be made, to the neglect of all others, and bringing every engine within the disputed district, which could possibly be thought of, to bear on the electors. When an election was anticipated, clubs were immediately formed, secret societies established, Radical newspapers set up, meetings held, speeches made, and published with the loudest encomiums by the Liberal press over the whole country. The refugees were everywhere foremost in this conflict; and it was surprising how soon they acquired the command of the principal cities in the Confederacy. Switzerland, so far as the great towns were concerned, seemed no longer itself, but rather a huge Babel, in which the exiles from all lands met to exercise, in various tongues,[1] their talents in exciting or misleading the

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 304, 311; Ann. Hist. xxx. 450, 451; Ann. Reg. 1847, 363.

people. City after city, canton after canton, in the plains, successively fell into their hands; and in the year 1845 a disputed election in the canton of Zurich, which the Radicals carried, gave them a majority in the general Diet of the Confederacy.

92. Origin of the religious disputes. July 1841.

No sooner did they gain this advantage than the Revolutionists proceeded to use their power in the most illegal and despotic way. By a fundamental article of their constitution it was provided that convents and chapters should be maintained, and their property secured, being subject to taxation like other lay possessions.* The public tranquillity, in a country where many of the cantons were nearly equally divided between Catholics and Protestants, rendered indispensable the faithful observance of this fundamental article of the constitution. No sooner, however, did the Radicals get the majority in the local legislature of the canton of Argovia, than they passed a decree suppressing the whole convents in it, and confiscating their property to the purposes of the canton, on the ground of their having fomented the public disturbances, and being incompatible with the peace of the country. On being appealed to, the general Diet, by a slender majority, refused to interfere with the decision of the canton of Argovia. This led to an energetic protest on the part of the seven cantons of Lucerne, Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, Zug, Fribourg, and the Valais, which still adhered to the Catholic faith, and among whose simple and sequestered mountaineers the new opinions had made no progress. Regarding the suppression of the convents in Argovia as in reality a stroke levelled at the Catholic religion itself, the provincial Diet of Lucerne invited Jesuits from all quarters to repair to their city, as the militia of the Church, sworn to defend it in moments of peril.[1]

July 17, 1841.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 451; D'Haussonville, ii. 309, 312; Ann. Reg. 1847, 350.

* "L'existence des chapitres et couvens, la conservation de leurs proprietés, en tant que cela dépend du Gouvernement du canton, sont garanties. Ces biens sont sujets aux impôts et aux contributions."—*Art.* 12 *du Pacte Fédéral.*

CHAP. XLVI.

1844.

93. Invasion of the Free Bands under Ochsenbein. Dec. 1844.

This invitation to the Jesuits, and the decree which invested them with the entire direction of the public education in the canton, was an unfortunate and injudicious step on the part of the Lucerne Catholics, not only on account of the known aspiring and aggressive character of that body of priests, but because Lucerne being at that period the place of meeting of the general Diet, it was the more incumbent on its local legislature not to adopt any measures which might awaken the jealousy of the Protestant cantons, which composed the great majority of the Confederacy.* If, however, this was a perilous, it may be an illegal, step on the part of the Lucerne Catholics, it was ere long forgotten in the still more violent and unjustifiable proceedings of their opponents. In the beginning of December a piratical band of "Free Companions," as they were called, assembled, and took up arms without any authority from their respective governments, and invaded the territory of Lucerne, expecting to be joined by the malcontents in that city, who were very numerous, especially among the lower orders. The magistrates, however, had received intelligence of the intended attack; the gates and walls were well guarded, and the invaders, who were a mere tumultuous mob, were repulsed without difficulty, and with scarcely any bloodshed. This led to strict measures against their own malcontents on the part of the magistrates of Lucerne, which, however, were for the most part restricted to banishment from the city and territory of Lucerne. Eleven hundred of these exiles, during the winter of 1844-5, were spread through the adjoining cantons, and by their complaints excited still further the general feeling against the Jesuits, and the canton of Lucerne, which abetted them in their dangerous designs. Encouraged by this state of things, the "Free Companions" resolved on a second effort against Lucerne, and this time it was attempted

Dec. 8, 1844.

* Switzerland at this period contained 2,400,000 inhabitants, of whom 1,500,000 were Protestants, and 900,000 Catholics.—*Ann. Reg.* 1847, p. 352.

with much larger forces and a more complete organisation. The Lucerne exiles, strengthened by volunteers from the neighbouring cantons of Berne, Soleure, Bâle, and Argovia, formed a body of eight hundred men, armed with twelve pieces of cannon, under Colonel Ochsenbein. The attack on Lucerne, with these formidable forces, was made on the 30th March 1845. But the Government of that canton called the landsturm of Uri, Zug, and Unterwalden to their support: the brave mountaineers hastened from their valleys at the call of religion and duty, and the unruly invaders were repulsed with severe loss in killed and wounded, and several hundred prisoners.[1]

March 30, 1845.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 360, 361; Ann. Hist. xxx. 450, 451; D'Haussonville, ii. 311, 313.

94. Which leads to the Sunderbund. May 1846.

This violent and piratical incursion, done without any State authority, by an armed mob, proved that the governments of the Radical cantons were either unable or unwilling to preserve the public peace, or protect the weaker part of the community from the aggressions of the stronger. As such, it dissolved society into its pristine elements, and both rendered necessary, and justified, a league of the weaker against the stronger. Thence the origin of the SUNDERBUND, a defensive league of the seven Catholic cantons of Lucerne, Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, Fribourg, Zug, and the Valais. The object of this league, which was concluded immediately after the last attack of the "Free Bands" on Lucerne, was to protect themselves from aggressions similar to those under which they had recently suffered, and to arm and organise their forces for this purpose, which was immediately done. As the supreme Government had virtually abdicated its functions, or taken part with the oppressors in the recent incursions of the Free Bands into Lucerne, there can be no doubt that this league had become necessary, and was justified by the right of self-preservation, the first law of nature.[2] But not less than the suppression of the convents in Argovia, which began the troubles, it was a violation of the written constitution, the 6th article of which

[2] Art. 6 du Pacte Fédéral; Ann. Reg. 1847, 363.

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

declared, "No alliances shall be formed by the cantons among each other, prejudicial either to the general Confederacy or to the rights of other cantons."

95. Proceedings of the great Council against the Sunderbund. Sept. 4, 1846.

The elections of 1845 at Zurich having given the Radicals a majority, though as yet only a small one, in the general Diet, a proposal was brought forward immediately after for the expulsion of the Jesuits from Switzerland; and the division upon this question showed the state of parties, and how nearly balanced they were. The votes in the Diet were taken by cantons: ten cantons and two half-cantons voted for it; nine cantons, including Geneva, against it. St Gall did not vote at all, its great council being equally divided on the question. The legality of the Sunderbund was afterwards brought before the Diet on 4th September 1846, and then the majority was more decided. Ten cantons and two half-cantons voted it illegal; the seven cantons of the Sunderbund with Appenzell maintained its legality; Neufchâtel, St Gall, Geneva, and Bâle Ville did not vote at all, but referred to farther instructions from their constituents. But in the course of 1846, and the first half of 1847, Radical revolutions took place both in Berne and Geneva; and in the former of these cities, which had become of great weight, as it had become by rotation the "vorort," or seat of government, Colonel Ochsenbein, the leader of the Free Bands, was elevated to the presidency. These changes, which were effected by the mere force of popular clamour and intimidation, excited by the clubs and secret societies, without bloodshed, with the vote of St Gall, which was won by a narrow majority to the revolutionary party, gave them a decided majority in the general great Council of the Confederacy. On the 20th July 1847 the Diet, by a majority of twelve cantons and two half-cantons to seven cantons, voted the alliance of the seven Catholic cantons illegal, and reserved to itself the right, if necessary, to adopt ulterior measures to enforce obedience to its decree.[1] This was followed up, on 3d September,

July 1846.

Oct. 7, 1846.

July 7, 1847.

Sept. 3.

1 Ann. Reg. 1847, 367, 368; Ann. Hist. xxx. 451, 452.

by a resolution, that the introduction of Jesuits into any of the states of the Confederacy was illegal, and interdicting their entrance in future, and inviting the cantons of Lucerne, Schwytz, Fribourg, and the Valais, where they were already established, to expel them from their territories.

96. Preparations for civil war. Oct. 20.

Civil war was now inevitable, and both sides made active preparations for it. The Diet, anxious to enforce its authority without an actual appeal to arms, published a proclamation, in which they disclaimed all intention of invading the constitutional rights of the seven cantons, and conjuring them to come to an accommodation; but in vain. The proclamation was interdicted in the seven cantons. As a last resource, they appointed commissioners to confer with those of the cantons on the terms of a compromise, and it was very near being effected; but the conference was broken off in consequence of the declinature of the Diet to give a pledge for the observance of the cantonal independence, in the event of the Jesuits being recalled by order of the Pope. The propositions of the seven cantons were finally rejected on 29th October, by a majority of twelve to seven cantons, and on the 4th November, the same majority resolved that the decree of 20th July should be carried into execution by force of arms. At the same time General Dufour was appointed commander-in-chief, and orders were given to concentrate the troops and march upon Fribourg and Lucerne. The general-in-chief, before commencing operations, issued a humane proclamation to his soldiers, enjoining strict discipline, and protection to the old men, women, and children, as well as the prisoners, "with many of whom you have often found yourselves in the same field."[1]

Oct. 29.

Nov. 4.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 369, 370; Ann. Hist. xxx. 452, 453.

97. Policy of France and Austria at this crisis.

Attentive observers of what was passing in the Helvetian mountains, the Cabinets of London, Paris, and Vienna were early estranged upon the Swiss question. Steady in his conservative policy, and apprehensive of the influence of a revolutionary government in Switzer-

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

land on the internal tranquillity of France, M. Guizot openly adhered to the Austrian view of the question, which was, that the independence of the seven cantons should be respected, and the formation of a democratic central despotism prevented. The committee which, at the Congress of Vienna, had reported on the affairs of Switzerland, had expressly made the independence of the cantons a condition of the neutrality of the Confederacy; and both Metternich and Guizot, mutually afraid of each other, and jealous of Switzerland becoming a united and therefore powerful military State, were strongly disposed to concur in the same views. The whole influence of both powers, which had thus come to act in concert, was accordingly thrown in to support the seven cantons; and when matters became threatening, and it was evident war could not be avoided, a large convoy of arms and ammunition, purchased in France with the privity of Government, set out from Besançon, for the use of the small cantons. The Swiss Government, however, having been apprised of what was going forward, sent orders to the canton of Neufchâtel, through which it required to pass, to stop the convoy; and before the orders could arrive, it had already been seized, and sent back to Yverdun by a large body of citizens, who took upon themselves to act in the name of the Government. At the same time the government of the canton of Vaud seized a steam-vessel on the lake of Neufchâtel, on which they placed a gun and a body of carabineers, to prevent the introduction of provisions and military munitions into the recusant cantons by water.[1]

[1] M. Guizot à M. Bois le Comte, February, 1847; D'Haussonville, ii. 310, 317, 324; Ann. Hist. xxx. 451, 452; Ann. Reg. 1847, 368, 369.

98. Policy of Lord Palmerston to support the Radicals.

Had Great Britain been united with France and Austria on this question, the revolutionary party in Switzerland would in all probability have been restrained, and the open oppression of the smaller cantons by the urban majorities in the larger prevented. It might have been expected that this would be the case, both because England had been a party to all the arrangements by which

the cantonal independence of the states of the Confederacy had been secured, and because Lord Palmerston had expressed himself in the strongest terms as to the necessity of upholding it when the country was convulsed in 1832 from the effects of the Revolution of the Barricades.* No occasion had ever occurred in which it was of more importance to carry into effect the views which he then so well expressed regarding the necessity of upholding the independence of the smaller cantons against the oppression of the greater, than this, when the larger cantons, after having connived at a practical invasion of the lesser by an unauthorised armed force, had now put the leader of that force at the head of the central government, and were preparing, by means of a Radical majority in the Diet, to compel the lesser cantons, by their violence, to abrogate their separate independence, and adopt measures regarding their dearest internal interests, directly at variance with the wishes of their whole inhabitants. But now the results of the fatal division on the Spanish marriages, and the false position in which Great Britain had become placed, from having allied itself everywhere with the democratic party, at once appeared. So far from uniting with France and Austria in their efforts to shield the lesser cantons of Switzerland from the oppression of the greater, Lord Palmerston did just the reverse, and it was mainly owing to his policy that the act consummating this oppression was carried into effect.[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 339, 346; Ann. Hist. xxx. 452, 454.

* "Vous direz que si les changements, que l'on a l'intention de proposer dans le pacte fédéral, portent seulement sur des dispositions réglementaires, il pourrait être plus prudent de les remettre à une époque future, lorsque l'esprit public sera devenu moins agité qu'il n'est maintenant, de peur qu'en soulevant ces questions cela ne mène à d'autres discussions plus embarrassantes. Mais si l'on a la pensée de faire des changements, tels qu'ils porteraient *sur la souveraineté indépendante et l'existence politique et séparée des cantons* vous représenterez fortement toutes les difficultés *et les dangers que l'exécution d'un pareil projet peut produire et combien il parait incompatible.* Vous ferez observer qu'il est tout à fait improbable que tous les cantons s'accordent sur un plan, qui ferait un tort manifeste à beaucoup d'entre eux, et que par conséquent toute tentative de mettre en action une telle réforme amenerait une guerre civile."—LORD PALMERSTON *à* M. PEROY, June 9, 1832; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 319, 320.

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

99. Divergence of Lord Palmerston's policy on the question.

In conformity with the instructions of M. Guizot, the French ambassador at Berne had explained distinctly to M. Ochsenbein the interpretation which, in common with Austria, the Cabinet of Paris put on the clauses in the treaties of Vienna regarding the rights of the lesser cantons, and the impossibility of their allowing the Confederacy to become a united military power.* Lord Palmerston, in the first instance, declared himself entirely satisfied with the policy of the French Government; and M. Morier, the British envoy in Switzerland, had expressed himself to M. Bois le Comte to the same effect. But when it came to the point of evincing that unity of feeling in overt acts, the British Foreign Minister drew back, and without openly expressing an opposite opinion, he declined to commit the British Government to any decided expression of it to the Swiss Diet.† In acting in this manner he appears to have been fol-

* "L'acte de Vienne reconnaît non pas une Suisse unitaire mais une Suisse fédérative composée de vingt-deux cantons—si un ou plusieurs de ces cantons viennent donc un jour nous dire qu'on menace leur existence indépendante, qu'on veut la contraindre ou la détruire, qu'on marche à substituer une Suisse unitaire à la Suisse cantonnale qui reconnaît ces traités, que nos traités sont atteints;—nous examinerons si en effet nos traités sont atteints. Je suis complètement en mesure d'ajouter que nous le ferons dans un parfait accord d'esprit et d'intentions avec les puissances signataires du même traité *et particulièrement avec l'Autriche* placée envers la Suisse dans une position analogue à la nôtre par la contiguité de ses frontières."—M. BOIS LE COMTE *à* M. OCHSENBEIN, Jan. 4, 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 341, 342.

† See memorandum on the affairs of Switzerland, transmitted by M. Morier to Lord Palmerston, July 1847.—*Parliamentary Papers on Switzerland*, 1847-8, p. 138. "Lord Palmerston m'a écouté attentivement et a exprimé son approbation de la politique du gouvernement du Roi. J'ai trouvé moins d'empressement chez lui, quand je lui ai demandé, conformément aux instructions de votre excellence, s'il était disposé à s'associer au langage que nous voulons tenir à la Diète Helvétique."—*M. l'Ambassadeur à Londres à* M. GUIZOT, July 5, 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 347, 349.—"J'ai d'abord donné à Lord Palmerston des instructions adressées par votre excellence à M. Bois le Comte. Lord Palmerston a paru m'écouter avec un vif intérêt, me priant à plusieurs reprises de relire les passages les plus importants, et il m'a témoigné ensuite *de lui-même son entière approbation de vous et des sentiments exprimés par le gouvernement du Roi*, je lui ai demandé des-lors s'il consentirait à s'associer à notre langage. Lord Palmerston m'a répondu qu'il avait déjà entretenu de cette affaire deux ses collègues, dont l'opinion s'accordait avec la sienne, mais qu'il ne pouvait me répondre définitivement avant d'avoir consulté le reste du conseil."—M. DE BROGLIE *à* M. GUIZOT, July 9, 1847; D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 350, 352.

lowing the opinion of a majority of the Cabinet, rather than his own. It soon appeared, however, that this majority was inclined to impel him into acts indicating clearly an intention to support the Radical Government of Switzerland in their measures of aggression on the lesser cantons. In conformity with his instructions, Mr Peel, the new British minister at Berne, presented to the Free-Band chief, M. Ochsenbein, the favourable opinion they entertained of him, "by reason of his high position, his *known character*, and his determination, already manifested, to preserve the internal peace of Switzerland." In expressing their wish for the internal peace of Switzerland, the British Cabinet were doubtless sincere; but it soon appeared that the mode in which they proposed to realise this wish, was by permitting the greater cantons to oppress the lesser with impunity, not by constraining the former to respect the rights of the latter.[1] *

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 352, 354.

100. Disastrous effect of this divergence.

The effect of this movement of the English Cabinet was in the highest degree pernicious. Instantly the news, with various additions, spread through the clubs: it was affirmed that England had now declared in favour of the Radical party; that she would not permit any intervention of France in the affairs of the Confederacy, and that there was nothing any longer to fear. Immense was the sensation produced by these reports, which were too much in harmony with the wishes of the Radical majority not to be universally believed by them. It was under the influence of this excitement that the resolution of the Diet of 3d September, to expel the Jesuits from Switzerland, was adopted. But for this declaration of the British Government in favour of the Swiss Radicals,

* "Conformément aux instructions de votre seigneurie, j'ai saisi l'occasion d'exprimer à M. Ochsenbein *l'opinion favorable que le gouvernement de sa Majesté a conçue de sa personne*, en raison de sa haute position, de son caractère bien connu et de sa détermination de faire tout ce qui sera en son pouvoir pour maintenir la tranquillité intérieure de la Suisse."—M. PEEL à LORD PALMERSTON, 14 Août 1847; *Parl. Papers relative to Switzerland*, August 1847, p. 164.

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

M. Ochsenbein and the revolutionary party would never have ventured, in the face of France and Austria, on the extreme measure of hoisting the signal of civil war in the Confederacy. The Revolutionists in France, who were commencing that agitation which so soon after overturned the throne, now openly coalesced with their brethren in the Swiss Diet; and it is not a little remarkable, that the first use of the expression "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," was made by a Swiss deputy excusing himself from attending the banquet at Chalons. "You have caught the idea," said M. Druey, the deputy of the canton of Vaud in the Diet, "that your cause and ours are the same. We sympathise with you, and you sympathise with us. The time has now arrived when it is necessary, on both sides of the Jura, to transfer from the region of ideas to that of action the great principles of LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY, which constitute the happiness of men as well as the glory of societies."[1]

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 356, 357.

101. Lord Palmerston delays to join in the French and Austrian intervention.

Lord Palmerston, however, was not an unconcerned spectator of the approaching conflict in Switzerland. He had been warned, two months before, that it was more than doubtful whether M. Ochsenbein, impelled as he was by the clubs, would be able to preserve peace. In consequence he had made repeated efforts, first through the medium of France and Austria, and more recently by Lord Minto, who took Berne in his way to Italy, to mediate between the contending parties; but the attempt proved abortive. The reason was, that the terms he proposed were, that "the Sunderbund should lay down their arms without a compromise for the present, or any security for the future"—terms which were equivalent to a surrender at discretion, and which the Helvetic chiefs, who knew the character of their opponents, justly deemed inadmissible. As matters grew more urgent, and hostilities were on the point of commencing, M. Guizot, as a last resource, transmitted on 4th November a note, in which he urged, in the strongest terms, the Cabinets of

Nov. 4.

England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, to interpose their good offices to prevent the effusion of blood in Switzerland; and on the 6th this note was presented by M. de Broglie to Lord Palmerston in London. An *immediate* answer was of the last importance, and might even at the eleventh hour have prevented hostilities, for the order to the army of the Diet to march against Fribourg and Lucerne had already been given. Instead, however, of giving an instant answer, which in the circumstances was so loudly called for, *Lord Palmerston kept the French note from the 6th to the 16th without an answer*, and at the expiration of that time returned not an adhesion, but a proposal for an agreement, in the first instance, between the mediating powers as to the terms on which the mediation was to be founded. This was directly espousing the cause of the Swiss Radicals, for it gained for them all that they wanted, which was delay. Without adopting, in the absence of proof, the assertion of M. Guizot's annalist, that Lord Palmerston, while gaining for the Swiss Radicals these diplomatic delays, was underhand pressing the march of the forces of the Confederacy against Lucerne,* it is sufficient to refer to public acts to show that his delay effectually aided the dominant party in Helvetia, and crushed its gallant mountaineers.[1] It was not till the 26th November that Lord Palmerston gave the adhesion of Great Britain to the collective note of the Continental powers, and two days before—viz., on the 24th—Lucerne had been taken

[1] D'Haussonville, ii. 364, 367; Ann. Hist. xxx. 455, 458.

* "Comme si ce n'était pas assez de tous ces délais, pour laisser aux forces considérables des Radicaux le temps d'écraser la faible résistance des cantons du Sunderbund, le secrétaire d'état de sa Majesté Britannique faisait hâter sous main la marche des troupes expédiées de Berne contre les malheureux défenseurs de Fribourg et de Lucerne."—D'HAUSSONVILLE, ii. 365. "Avouez au moins dis-je à M. Peel que Lord Palmerston a fait une belle fin, et que vous nous avez joué un tour en pressant les évènements. Il se tut. J'ajoutai: pourquoi faire le mystérieux? Après une partie, on peut bien dire je sais qu'on m'a joué. Et bien, dit-il alors: "*J'ai fait dire au Général Dufour d'en finir vite.*' Je regardai M. De Zayas pour constater ces paroles. Son regard me cherchait aussi."—M. BOIS LE COMTE à M. GUIZOT, 31st December 1847; No. 240 *des Dépêches*.

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

by the troops of the Confederacy, and the contest was at an end.

102. Forces on both sides.

In truth, the forces of the Confederacy, as compared with those of the Sunderbund, were so immense that the contest was evidently hopeless on the part of the latter, and nothing was wanting but time to secure victory to the former. The population of the twelve cantons hostile to the Sunderbund was 1,867,000 souls; that of the seven cantons which composed that league was only 394,629 souls. Bâle, Neufchâtel, and Appenzell, which remained neuter, had 105,000 souls. The contingent of the first was 50,104, and their landwehr 46,829—in all, 96,993 men, with 278 pieces of artillery; that of the Sunderbund was only 11,387 men, and their landwehr 20,436—in all, 31,823, with 87 guns. Twenty guns additional had been bought by the Sunderbund abroad, and some slender supplies of arms and ammunition had reached them from France and Austria. Thus the Radical forces were three times those of the Conservative; and though the latter were known to enjoy the good wishes of the great military monarchies of France and Austria, yet not a man was moved forward to their defence. The weight of England, and the dread of a general war thrown in on the other side, paralysed all their measures, and left the Swiss mountaineers to contend alone with the overwhelming superiority of their antagonists. Yet they disdained submission, and advanced to the conflict with the same undaunted spirit that their ancestors did to the fields of Naefels and Morgarten.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 458; Ann. Reg. 1847, 371; D'Haussonville, ii. 371, 372.

103. Easy success of the Radicals.

But the times were changed, and heroic valour was no longer capable of withstanding a great superiority of military force. The construction of roads through their territory had deprived the Swiss of their natural means of defence; the introduction of artillery had levelled the superiority of their moral resolution. The first efforts of the Radical army were directed against Fribourg. On

Nov. 13.

the 13th of November, General Dufour had concentrated

twenty-five thousand men, with seventy guns, in front of that town. The magistrates, in no condition to resist forces so considerable, were under the necessity of capitulating, which they did on the guarantee that life and property should be respected. This was at once agreed to; but no sooner were the troops of the Diet in possession of the town than they abandoned themselves to every species of military excess, generally undergone only by a town which has been carried by assault. This shameful breach of the capitulation occurred under the very eyes of General Dufour, who, however indignant, was unable to prevent it, and furnished a theme for fresh and eloquent declamation, on the part of Count Montalembert, in the Chamber of Deputies in Paris. The next operation of the federal army, though more seriously resisted, was not less successful. On the 22d November, Nov. 22. General Dufour's army crossed the frontier of Lucerne in three massy columns, and advanced against the city, which was the capital of the Sunderbund. His forces consisted of sixty thousand men, and they had no less than two hundred pieces of cannon. The troops of the Sunderbund did not exceed eighteen thousand men, with forty guns. Notwithstanding this great disproportion of force, which rendered success hopeless, the mountaineers made a gallant defence, and it was after a serious and bloody encounter that they were overpowered, and driven back to the gates of Lucerne. Then, as the contest was evidently at an end, the army of the Sunderbund dispersed, and the city of Lucerne, now left without defence, surrendered at discretion. The direction of the affairs of the canton was, three days after, put into the hands of the Radical leaders, and the remaining cantons of the Sunderbund sent in their submission, which was only accepted on condition that the refractory cantons should defray the whole expenses of the war.[1]

Nov. 24. Nov. 27. [1] D'Haussonville, ii. 372, 374; Ann. Hist. xxx. 460, 461, 462; Ann. Reg. 1847, 371.

Meanwhile, Lord Palmerston was considering the terms on which the mediation of the five great powers should

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

104. The tardy mediation of the five powers is declined.

be offered; and on the 26th, two days after Lucerne had surrendered, he at length agreed to the conditions proposed by them, which were, that the Catholic cantons should be allowed to refer the religious part of the dispute to the Pope; that the Diet should undertake to defend the sovereignty of such of the lesser states as might be threatened; that the Sunderbund should be dissolved, and a mutual disarmament take place. Nothing could be more equitable than these conditions; and, had they been agreed to by England on the 6th November, they would have prevented the conflict. Delayed till the 26th, when Lucerne was taken and the Sunderbund dissolved, it was too late; the victorious Radicals declared, with justice, that there were no longer two parties to interpose between, and refused the proffered mediation.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1847, 372, 373; Ann. Hist. xxx. 462, 463; D'Haussonville, ii. 373, 374.

105. Alarm which these measures of England awakened on the Continent.

These decisive steps on the part of the Government of Great Britain in favour of the revolutionary party in so many states of Western Europe, had come now to awaken the serious apprehensions of *all* the great Continental powers. Since the changes in the ruling party in England, effected by the Reform Bill, its rulers had, in conjunction with France, effected the partition of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and forcibly prevented the victorious arms of their sovereign from regaining his lost inheritance. In conjunction with the same power, they had changed the order of succession in Spain, placed a queen, supported by the movement party, on the throne, both of Spain and Portugal, and beat down, after a heroic struggle, the efforts of the Basque mountaineers to maintain their constitutional rights. In opposition to France, they had more recently encouraged the demands for organic reform in the Italian states; changes so great as to amount to revolution had followed in the footsteps of their legate; and Sicily had at length been landed in open revolt, in consequence of the hopes of succour which they permitted to be formed. By a policy more guarded, but not less effectual, they had accomplished the overthrow of the

Conservative party in Switzerland, and placed the revolutionary leader of the Free Bands and his associates at the head of the whole forces of the Helvetic Confederacy.

106. Formation of a league against Great Britain.

So alarming had this policy become, that the Cabinets of the Continent deemed it indispensable to unite in joint measures for their common defence, and the task was committed to General Radowitz on the part of Prussia and Russia, and Count Colloredo on that of Austria. These two eminent diplomatists, after having met, and concerted measures in Germany, repaired to Paris, where they entered into communication with M. Guizot, by whom they were cordially received. The English agents at Vienna, Berlin, and Berne, warned the British Government repeatedly, in the course of the winter of 1847-8, that something underhand was in agitation;* but they were far from being aware of the extent and imminence of the danger which threatened. It is now known, from the revelations of the Ministers of Louis Philippe, that the overtures of the Northern Powers had been accepted by the French Government, and the 15th March fixed for the conclusion of definitive arrangements against Great Britain! The Revolution of 1848, by setting the Continental powers against each other, probably saved Great Britain from a contest, single-handed, with a confederacy as powerful as that which overthrew France on the field of Leipsic.†

* See, in particular, the last pages of the papers communicated to Parliament in 1848-9, on the affairs of Italy and Switzerland.

† "Désespérant de pouvoir jamais s'entendre avec un gouvernement qui s'était fait à Madrid le patron des cabales Espagnoles, qui à Rome, à Naples et en Sicile favorisait la destruction des institutions, et la levée des boucliers en Grèce, qui était devenu un agent incessant de trouble et de désordre, qui avait livré les conservateurs de Fribourg et de Lucerne à la colère des Radicaux Suisses, les grandes puissances de l'Europe *venaient témoigner à la France le désir de se concerter avec elle, à l'exclusion de l'Angleterre. Notre Cabinet avait accepté leurs ouvertures; un jour était pris (le 15 Mars) pour donner aux arrangements déjà débattus une forme arrêtée et précise.* Ainsi était franchi un pas immense. Ces mêmes puissances du nord si hostiles en 1830, qui avaient eu si grande hâte de prendre parti contre nous, et pour l'Angleterre en 1840 au sujet des affaires du Levant, qui étaient restées passives et neutres en 1846 après les mariages Espagnoles, en 1848 après les affaires de la Suisse, se mettaient avec

CHAP. XLVI.

1847.

107. Weakness of Great Britain at sea and land at this period.

When dangers so formidable and so imminent threatened England in consequence of the policy which her rulers had adopted, it is worth while, as a matter of historical curiosity, to examine what preparations the Government of Great Britain had made to meet the crisis. This matter is now finally set at rest by official authority. It appears from a return presented to Parliament on 1st June 1857, that the total military forces in the pay of Great Britain in 1847-8 were 138,769 men, of whom 30,497 were in India, and 41,393 stationed in the other colonies, leaving 67,005 for service in Great Britain and Ireland; of whom certainly not more than 30,000 could be reckoned on as capable of combating in the former island. As at least half of this force would be required to garrison the maritime fortresses, upon the preservation of which the very existence of the empire depended, not more than 15,000 men could have been collected to keep the field against a coalition, which would with ease have invaded the country with 150,000 men! Nor were the naval forces more considerable; for it appears from the same return, that in the year 1847-8, the number of sailors and boys voted was only 29,500, and marines 11,000—in all, 40,500; a force little more than a fifth of what the nation, with not half the resources, had on foot during the war, and which could not by possibility have produced ten sail of the line in the Channel to meet a sudden emergency, or protect the shores of the empire from invasion from Powers who had forty sail in the Baltic and Channel ready for sea.

This extraordinary disproportion between the magnitude of the danger evoked, and the diminutive amount of the forces provided to meet it, is one of the most curious and instructive circumstances which the annals

nous contre l'Angleterre. Nous n'avions pas passé de leur côté, elles avaient passé du nôtre. C'était le tour de l'Angleterre d'être mise dans l'isolement." — D'HAUSSONVILLE, vol. ii. pp. 381, 382 (the publisher of Guizot's papers with his authority).

of that memorable period present. That the vast majority of mankind of every rank and amount of instruction are incapable of foresight, and willing to incur the risk of any danger in future, however great, rather than incur the burden of any preparation at present, however small, is unhappily too well known, both in private life and the affairs of nations. But the extraordinary and apparently inexplicable thing is, that this absence of foresight in previous preparation should be accompanied by so ambitious and aggressive a policy in every quarter, and that the strides made, calculated to excite the most formidable foreign hostility, should be in the inverse ratio of any preparations to meet its dangers. The only explanation which can be given of it is, that the great majority of men are at once ambitious and unforeseeing; willing to support any aggressive policy which promises success, provided only no demand is made on their purses to defray its expenses, and that a government returned by a mere numerical majority necessarily partakes of the same character. This observation applies only to the preparation for future and contingent danger. When peril is present and apparent, not merely to the prophetic eye of wisdom, but to the present gaze of the multitude, no society ever makes such great and magnanimous efforts to avert it as that which is of a democratic character.

108. Reflections on the extraordinary disproportion of the danger and means of resistance.

It appears at first sight a not less singular and inexplicable circumstance, that the foreign policy of France and England should at this period have been directly the reverse of what, *a priori*, might have been expected from either. The Citizen King, elected during a revolutionary convulsion, had become essentially conservative, and his ministers had adopted the policy of the despotic Continental Powers, and entered into the closest relations with them, while monarchical England had espoused the cause of Liberalism, and its Government was everywhere looked up to as the avowed head of the movement party in Europe. But a very little consideration must be suffi-

109. Cause of the opposite foreign policy of France and England at this period.

CHAP. XLVI. 1847.

cient to show how this had come to pass, and what it was which had now arrayed Great Britain on the side of revolution. It was the domestic position of the two Cabinets which had occasioned the anomaly, and brought their foreign policy into direct contradiction with their previous settled maxims. Continually assailed by an anarchical faction, which was exasperated by being deprived of the fruits of revolution, Louis Philippe and Guizot were driven to take refuge with the Conservatives, as their only security for existence. Watched by a powerful conservative Opposition, against which they with difficulty maintained their ground in either House of Parliament, the Liberal Cabinet of England sought for support in the establishment of constitutional governments in all the adjoining states of Europe.

110. The completeness of revolution in one country, and its incompleteness in the other, occasioned the difference.

It was the completeness of the revolution in France which rendered Guizot conservative; it was the incompleteness of the revolution in Great Britain which rendered Lord Palmerston, in foreign affairs at least, revolutionary. Guizot was noways afraid of being supplanted by M. Berryer or Count Montalembert, but very much so of being overthrown by M. Thiers and Odillon Barrot. Lord Palmerston was not haunted by the dread of a cabinet headed by Cobden and Bright, but very much so of one led by Lord Derby and Mr Disraeli. There never were Ministers in either State who had the advancement and glory of their respective countries more sincerely at heart than Guizot and Lord Palmerston; but both were, probably unconsciously to themselves, mainly guided in their foreign policy by their domestic position; and both brought the countries they respectively directed into the most serious ultimate dangers, from a desire to strengthen their present position in reference to the party from whom at home they apprehended a removal from power.

CHAPTER XLVII.

FRANCE FROM THE MIDDLE OF 1847 TO THE FALL OF LOUIS PHILIPPE IN FEBRUARY 1848.

CHAP. XLVII.

1847.

1. Alarming internal state of France in the end of 1847.

THREATENING as the aspect of external affairs was in Europe in the last months of 1847, the appearance of domestic concerns was still more alarming. On all sides were to be seen the symptoms of corruption in society, discontent in opinion, and imbecility in government, the usual and well-known precursors of public calamities or social convulsion. The Revolution of 1830 had disappointed the expectations and damped the hopes of all parties concerned in it. The ardent democrats who originated the change had seen with unutterable vexation its fruits slip from their grasp, and a government established, in consequence of this insurrection, differing from that which had preceded it only in being more expensive, more despotic, and more hostile to the realisation of their dreams. The army, whose defection had determined the contest, had since proved itself on every occasion faithful to its duty, but it was far from being satisfied with the results of the change; and by no means regarded the sterile laurels won in the fields of Algeria as a compensation for the want of the conquests of the Empire, which it had fondly hoped to see renewed under the restored tricolor flag. The bourgeois class was generally prosperous, in consequence of the long peace which the King had so firmly maintained; but it was

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

seriously shaken in opinion by the long and acrimonious hostility which the daily press had maintained against the Government in consequence of the disappointment which its leaders felt in not having become the rulers of the State. The clergy, alienated beyond redemption by the events of 1830, were not openly arrayed against the Government, but stood aloof in sullen neutrality, and withheld from it all that support which was so material, especially in securing the allegiance of the vast rural population of France. The Chamber of Deputies, the representative, under the existing electoral system, of only one interest in society—that of the middle class—had lost entirely the confidence of the nation, from its prolonged resistance to the wishes of the majority, and its inflexible adherence to its own material interests, as distinct from the general welfare of the community. The King, old and infirm, had preserved of his former well-marked character only its obstinacy, and, long accustomed to govern by his own will, was blind to the signs of the times, which filled every one else with apprehension. Finally, the working classes, especially in the great towns, were labouring under extreme distress, the result partly of the long-continued fall of prices, which originated in the inadequacy of the currency of the world to meet its rapidly-increasing transactions, partly of the extraordinary monetary crisis which had befallen Great Britain.

2. Prince de Joinville's letter to the Duke de Nemours. Nov. 7, 1847.

A very competent observer, and no prejudiced opponent of the dynasty on the throne, has left the following graphic account of the internal condition of France at this period. On November 7, 1847, the Prince de Joinville wrote as follows to the Duke de Nemours: "I write one word to you, for I am disquieted at the events which I see on all sides thickening around us. Indeed, I begin to be seriously alarmed. The death of Bresson* has filled me with apprehension. He was not insane; he executed his design with deliberation and coolness.

* The ambassador at Naples, who had committed suicide.

My letters from Naples leave no room for doubt as to what was the real cause of that catastrophe; his feelings were lacerated towards our father. The King is inflexible; he will listen to no advice; his own will must prevail over everything. It seems to me impossible that in the Chamber of Deputies, in the next session, the anomalous state of the Government should not attract attention, which has effaced all traces of constitutional government, and has put forward the King as the primary, and indeed sole mover on all questions. There are no longer any Ministers; their responsibility is null; everything rests with the King. He has arrived at an age when observations are no longer listened to; he is accustomed to govern, and he loves to show that he does so. His immense experience, his courage, and great qualities, lead him to face danger, but it is not on that account the less real or imminent..

"Our situation is far from encouraging. In the interior, the state of our finances, after seventeen years of peace, is far from good. Abroad, where we might have sought some compensation and gratification to our national vanity, we have not acquired distinction. The return of Palmerston to power, by awakening the distrust and jealousy of the King, has caused us to engage in the affair of the Spanish marriages, and attached to us the deplorable reproach of breach of faith. Separated by this cause from England, at the very time when the affairs of Italy became complicated, we have been debarred from taking an active part in them, or adopting the side which was in unison with our principles. We did not venture to throw down the gauntlet to Austria, for fear of seeing England reorganise against us the Holy Alliance. We are coming before the Chamber with a deplorable interior, an exterior not much better: all the consequences of the King's government; of the old age of a king who insists on governing, but who lacks the strength to adopt a manly resolution. The worst is,

3. Concluded.

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

that I see no remedy to this state of things. I once hoped that Italy might have furnished the means of extricating ourselves from it; but the best thing we can now do is, to set sail and leave it, because if we remained we should be obliged to make common cause with the retrograde party, which would be attended in France with disastrous consequences. Those unhappy Spanish marriages! We have not yet drained the cup of bitterness which they have compelled us to drink."[1] *

[1] Regnault, iii. 321, 323.

4. Views of the King on the subject.

The dangers here ably summed up were so evident that every one who had the least of a reflecting mind saw them distinctly, and the King was not insensible to their existence; but he did not see how they were to be avoided. Concession to the republican party, and a general change in external policy, so earnestly pressed upon him by the Liberals, would lead at once to a general war, which was not to be thought of now that Great Britain was alienated by the Spanish marriages; and it would at once provoke resistance from the majority in the Chambers elected by the middle class, which was the only real support of his throne. Influenced by this consideration, he saw no alternative but to persist in the system of resistance, and for that purpose to secure the support of the army by indulgences, and of the Chamber by corruption. To effect these objects his whole efforts, during the last months of his reign, were unceasingly directed. Of course the very success with which they were for the time attended only widened the breach between the Government and the people, and increased the general discontent.[2] The King, though he persisted in his policy as a matter of necessity, was far from being insensible to the dangers with which it was attended, and often said to

[2] Cassagnac, Histoire de la Chûte de Louis Philippe, i. 25; Regnault, iii. 323, 324.

* The Author gives this letter as he finds it quoted in the French historians, without guaranteeing its authenticity, which, judging from internal evidence, he is inclined to doubt, for it looks very like an *ex post facto* composition. Whether it is so or not, it is at least an able *résumé* of the views of the Liberal party at this period, and the principal grounds of their complaints against the Government of the King.

his ministers, with a mournful voice, "I see no supporters of order forming behind you; you are the last of the Romans." CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

5. Deficiency of the crops in 1845 and 1846.

Accustomed to see public feeling influenced chiefly by impulses derived from foreign affairs, and anything which touched the national honour, the French Government at this period was by no means sufficiently alive to the consequences of the monetary crisis arising from the like deficiency of the crops, especially that of potatoes, which at the same period was attended with such disastrous effects in Great Britain and Ireland. The consequence was, a very considerable rise of prices of all sorts of subsistence, which at length, though after a long delay, forced the Government, in the close of that year, to take off all duties on the importation of grain. This measure, however, could only relieve the scarcity after time had elapsed for cargoes to arrive from the corn-growing countries; and this was much extended by the effects of a severe frost in the Euxine and Sea of Azof, which stopped the navigation of those waters by the accumulation of floating ice with which they were charged. The consequence was, that it was not till February 1846 that the long-wished-for cargoes began to arrive, and meanwhile the people were reduced to very great straits by the high price of provisions. To diminish the pressure, Government issued orders transferring the purchase of wheat for the army, which amounted annually to 500,000 quintals, and for the navy, which exceeded 100,000, from the interior to foreign ports, for the whole of 1846 and 1847. But this, though in the circumstances a wise, was only a prospective measure; and meanwhile prices rose so seriously that the municipality of Paris, to preserve the public tranquillity, were reduced to the desperate expedient, often adopted by them, of forcibly reducing the price of grain, and paying the difference between the selling and the real price out of the corporation funds.[1] Bread of the best quality was by this means

Nov. 17, 1845.

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 18, and Dec. 27, 1845; Regnault, iii. 139, 143.

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

maintained at 80 centimes, or 16 sous the two kilogrammes; but to effect this the city had to borrow the enormous sum of 25,000,000 francs, or £1,000,000 sterling.

6. Failure of the potato crop in 1846, and monetary crisis.

These evils were sufficiently serious in themselves; but they became much more pressing, and led to other still more serious consequences, in the following year. The potato crop in France, as in Ireland, failed much more extensively in 1846 than it had done in 1845; and the consequences, as in Great Britain, were much aggravated by the railway mania, which at the same period, as on this side of the Channel, had seized upon the country. The importation of grain went on largely during the whole of that year, to supply the deficiency of domestic produce; and the consequence was a drain upon the metallic treasures of the Bank to pay for the importation of food. To such a length did this go that, from the official statement published in the *Moniteur*, it appeared that the specie in the Bank amounted, on 26th December, only to 71,000,000 francs, while its liabilities for notes and deposits were 368,000,000 francs.* The danger was immediate and imminent; and in order to guard against it, the Bank in the first week of 1847 raised their discounts from 4 to 5 per cent. This sudden advance, which was not expected, excited great alarm in Paris, which was not allayed till the Emperor of Russia, in March, made an offer to purchase 50,000,000 francs worth of French Government stock, with gold stored up in St Petersburg, the produce of the Oural Mountains. This offer was accepted, and the stock was bought at the rate of 115 francs 75 centimes per cent.[1] This ample supply of gold from the Russian treasures compensated the drain arising from the importation of food, and went far to suspend the crisis, while the Government also

Jan. 2, 1847.

March 17.

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 31, 1846, and Jan. 2, and March 25, 1847; Regnault, iii. 144, 146; Ann. Hist. xxx. 221, 223.

* On the 26th December 1845 the specie in the Bank had been 187,000,000 francs, or £7,420,000. The diminution in the year 1846, therefore, had been 116,000,000 francs, or £4,640,000.—*Ann. Hist.* xxx. 222.

derived benefit from it by the confidence which it evinced in the stability and resources of France.

7. Financial state of 1847, and great loans contracted for by the Government.

The relief afforded by this seasonable supply of gold from Russia, however, could in the nature of things only be temporary: as long as the causes which occasioned a great drain of specie continued to operate, a continuance of the danger was to be apprehended. This, accordingly, was what occurred. The financial state of the country in 1847 was anything but reassuring, and clearly evinced how severely the crisis which had been passed had affected the springs of public prosperity. The expenses of the year reached the enormous amount of 1,405,336,062 francs, and the estimate for 1848 was 1,446,210,170.[1] The deplorable system, which had been so long pursued, of borrowing to the extent of four or five millions sterling every year, and augmenting the floating debt by that amount, without any prospect of paying it off, now fell with accumulated force upon the Government; and the weight was felt the more sensibly that the high prices of provisions, which were double their usual level, lessened the resources of the people, and the vast importation of grain and export of gold curtailed credit in every department. The statement of the Finance Minister in January 1847 admitted a floating uncovered debt of 500,000,000 francs, and he estimated the deficit of 1847 at 117,000,000 francs. In this embarrassed state of the public treasury it was impossible to continue the allocation of 246,000,000 francs, which, under the law of 1842, should this year have been devoted to railways and other public works, and the sum devoted to that department was diminished by 100,000,000 francs. Yet, even at this reduced rate, the floating debt in the course of the year 1847 mounted up to 700,000,000 francs, while the great diminution in the sum allotted to public works proved a serious aggravation of the sufferings of the labouring classes of the people.[2] No resource remained but a great loan; and by a law passed on 8th August in this year, no less than 350,000,000

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 32, 33; Doc. Hist.

[2] Moniteur, Aug. 9, and Nov. 9, 1847; Ann. Hist. xxx. 220, 225.

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

francs were authorised to be borrowed. The great reduction, however, in the expenditure on public works enabled the Government to restrict the loan to 250,000,000 francs which was contracted for on the 8th November, by the house of Rothschild, at the rate of 75 francs 25 centimes for each £100 of 3 per-cent stock.

8. Enlarged issue of bank-notes. June 10, 1847.

These great loans relieved the difficulties of the treasury, but they by no means lessened the severity of the monetary crisis upon the country. On the contrary, by draining away so large a part of the capital of the country to public purposes, they diminished in a proportional degree that portion of it which could be devoted to the alleviation of private embarrassments. The contraction of credit, and consequent diminution of the currency, was felt as a sore and constantly-increasing evil during the last half of the year. It is now evident to what this calamitous state of things was owing. It arose from the vast increase in the importation of grain, in consequence chiefly of the failure of the potato crop, which was *triple* what it had been in the preceding year,* and which, by occasioning a constant drain upon the specie of the Bank for its payment, of necessity occasioned a corresponding diminution in the circulation. The effects were soon felt in every branch of industry. Already one half of the railways in progress were stopped, or going on with only half their number of labourers. So stringent did the crisis become, that it would to all appearance have led, as it had done in Great Britain, to an entire suspension of credit and destruction of industry, when it was arrested by a measure, as bold as it was judicious, which at once applied the appropriate remedy to the evil. Towards the close of the year, the Chamber was prevailed on to sanction the issue of notes for 200 francs (£8), in addition to

* Grain imported into France in 1846 and 1847.

	Quintals.
1846,	2,332,000
1847,	6,920,000

—*Ann. Hist.* xxx. 226.

those for 500 francs (£20), which had hitherto formed the paper circulation, and the Bank, though at first with fear and trembling, ventured to issue the notes. The effect was as instantaneous as the suspension of the Bank Charter Act in England, in this very year, in arresting the panic. But the consequences of the monetary crisis, which had been so appalling, were equally disastrous on both sides of the Channel. The remedy came too late to arrest the evils which had been induced; and the general distress, especially among the working classes in Paris and other great towns, continued unabated during the whole winter which ensued, and must be regarded as one of the principal causes of the revolution which ensued in the following February.[1] *

[1] Ann. Hist. xxx. 32, 34; Doc. Hist.

In this disastrous state of the material comforts and

* The particulars of the financial and monetary crisis in France in 1847 are extremely valuable and instructive, from the light they throw on the subject; and they have by no means received the attention on either side of the Channel which they deserve. In the fifth volume of Mr Tooke's *History of Prices* continued by Mr Newmarsh, the subject is for the first time treated with the latter gentleman's wonted accuracy and distinctness. It appears that, between January 1846 and December 1847, the specie, discounts, circulation, and deposits of the Bank of France stood as follows, in English money, at 25 francs to the £1 :—

Months.	Specie.	Circulation. Notes.	Discounts.	Deposits.
1846.	£	£	£	£
Jan.—April, .	7,560,000	10,350,000	7,230,000	7,840,000
May—July, .	7,910,000	10,400,000	5,450,000	6,960,000
Aug.—Oct., .	7,590,000	10,340,000.	5,420,000	7,010,000
Nov.—Dec., .	4,400,000	10,400,000	6,180,000	4,450,000
1847.				
Jan.—April, .	2,660,000	10,220,000	7,720,000	3,930,000
May—July, .	3,100,000	9,630,000	4,700,000	3,990,000
Aug.—Oct., .	3,560,000	9,190,000	6,980,000	4,220,000
Nov.—Dec., .	3,380,000	9,380,000	6,000,000	3,150,000

It is very remarkable, from this table, how steady the circulation was kept in France during the whole crisis, even at its very worst. Although the specie in the Bank had decreased to less than a half, and the deposits in a still greater proportion—which sufficiently proved the severity of the strain—the circulation and discounts were only reduced, the former by a tenth, the latter by a ninth. This bold and withal judicious conduct must have gone far to mitigate the severity of the pressure, by making use of paper in its true capacity, as a substitute for gold when the precious metals are withdrawn, instead of a representative of them, and, of course, drawn in with their diminution. At the same time, in all comparisons of the monetary system of France with that of this country, the extremely small, and even *retail* character of the

CHAP. XLVII.

1847.

9. General corruption in the Government departments.

resources of the people, it was no difficult matter to render them discontented; and the Liberal press, seeing their advantage, exerted themselves to the utmost to make the most of it, and turn the ill-humour arising from the distress which prevailed into a torrent of indignation against the Ministers. In truth, the Government had nothing to do with it further than by having given in so long to the prevailing illusion of the day, which was, that the paper currency must be kept entirely dependent on the retention of gold; and by sanctioning the emission of notes for 200 francs, they had made an important step in the right direction, and sensibly, though only at the eleventh hour, contributed to arrest the causes of the public suffering. But this subject was even less understood at this period in France, by the great body of the people, than it was in England; and everything, rightly or wrongly, was ascribed by the Liberal press to the faults of Government. Unfortunately too, at this period, many circumstances occurred which not merely furnished them with a fair ground for declamation, but with legitimate causes of complaint. The corruption among the public functionaries at this period had become such that it could scarcely be credited, if not attested by the incontrovertible evidence of judicial proceedings and judgments. Every day revealed fresh instances of it, either in the public functionaries or in some persons connected with them; and the abuses had become so common that they reached not only the inferior persons, but some of the highest in office and rank, and even some of the Cabinet Ministers were not altogether free from suspicion.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 231, 232; Ann. Hist. xxx. 235, 236.

commercial transactions of the former country compared with our own, is to be taken into view. From a careful examination of the elaborate table, published by the Bank of France in regard to its transactions, Mr Newmarsh has arrived at the following extremely curious conclusions as to the comparative bill-transactions of the two countries:—

	France.	England.
Bills under discount, . . .	£18,000,000	£130,000,000
Bill circulation at one time, . .	23,000,000	130,000,000

—Newmarsh, vi. pp. 49, 54.

For a considerable time the public press had denounced alleged corruptions in various departments of the public service, particularly in the naval arsenals, and even designated the individuals against whom the delinquencies were charged; but the people were so accustomed to accusations of that description, that for long they excited very little attention. At length, however, events occurred which proved, even to the most incredulous, that they had too much foundation. On the 1st August 1845, a great fire broke out in the Arsenal Mourillon, one of the greatest in Toulon, which in a few hours consumed stores to the amount of 3,000,000 francs (£120,000). It was suspected at the time that this conflagration was the work of incendiaries, and intended to conceal the dilapidation which had been going on in the public stores. Nothing transpired, however, which justified the suspicions, but it led to inquiries into other departments of the public service, and more abuses were speedily brought to light, which startled the public by their frequency and long impunity. An inquiry which was instituted at Rochefort proved that 38 per cent of the grain and other provisions served out to the seamen in the royal navy was composed of adulterations, consisting of innutritious substances. No less than six-and-thirty persons were convicted, after a long trial, of this offence, and sentenced to various degrees of imprisonment, at the assizes held at Vienne, on the 13th January 1847. In the course of the inquiries which these discoveries led to, it was ascertained that so frequent had this species of fraud become, and so shamefully was it connived at by the public officers, whose duty it was to detect and check such malversations, that several *employés*, whose salary was from 2000 to 3000 francs a-year (£80 to £120), had, in twenty years, amassed fortunes of 200,000 to 300,000 francs (£8000 to £12,000). M. Janson, the Comptroller of Marine, declared in his deposition that all the representations which he had addressed to the Minister of the Marine and the prefect

10. Events which brought it to light.

Aug. 1, 1845.

Jan. 13, 1847.

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

at Rochefort on the subject, had remained without effect. The Comptroller of Subsistences then committed suicide, to withdraw himself from these inquiries. A similar fraud was discovered in the office of the Comptroller of the supply of grain for the use of the army at Paris, which amounted to 14,000 quintals of wheat, worth 400,000 francs. This case was the more injurious to the Government, that it appeared that the official persons had exerted themselves to stifle inquiry; and the truth was only brought to light by the case having been brought before the Chamber of Deputies, and being by their intervention sent to the assizes.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 235,236; Ann. Hist. xxx. 232, 236.

11. Revelation of further scandal.

The detection of these frauds was soon followed by other revelations which still more nearly affected the character and weight of the Legislature and the Government. On 17th February 1847, M. Drouillard was found guilty of having obtained his election for Quimperlé by bribery, and sentenced to pay a fine of 7400 francs, and to be incapable of holding any civil office during ten years. At this trial it was proved that 145,000 francs had been expended on this election; a sum inconsiderable indeed compared to what has long been known in England, but which seemed immense in a country so recently initiated into the mysteries of constitutional government as France. This was immediately followed by more formidable charges. M. Emile de Girardin accused the Ministry, in the *Presse* of 12th May, of having sold promises of seats in the Peers for 80,000 francs; and granted a licence for a third Lycée Théâtre, in consideration of a bribe of 100,000 francs; and, for a sum of 1,200,000 francs, engaged to bring forward a law favourable to the interests of some postmasters. For this he was cited before the Chamber of Peers, on the accusation of the Chamber of Deputies; and although that judicature passed to the order of the day on the charge, and the Deputies did the same by a majority of 225 to 102, yet the public were by no means satisfied that the charges were not well

June 22, 1847.

founded. Hardly was the din excited by these proceedings hushed when a still more formidable charge, implicating the Government directly, arose on a litigation between M. Parmentier and General Cubières, formerly holding office under M. Guizot's administration. It appeared from some of the General's letters relating to a company for working certain salt-mines, that he had expressed himself in terms implying, beyond all dispute, that he considered the Cabinet Ministers themselves as not beyond the reach of corrupt considerations.* In consequence of this, a royal ordonnance was issued, which directed the accusation, before the Chamber of Peers, of General Cubières; M. Teste, formerly Minister of Public Works; MM. Parmentier and Pellapra. They were brought to trial on 8th July. On the evening before, M. Teste resigned his situation as Peer of France and President of the Court of Cassation, "in order," as he himself expressed it, "that he might be defended only by his innocence."[1]

[1] Moniteur, July 9, 1847; Ann. Hist. xxx. 239, 240; Regnault, iii. 249, 251.

12. Result of the trial, and conviction of the accused. July 17, 1847.

The trial came on on the 8th July, and, as might have been expected, where persons of such station and rank were implicated as accused parties, created an immense sensation; and the result outstripped even the most sanguine hopes of the opponents of the Government. After a long trial, it came out that the sum of 100,000 francs (£4000) had been given by M. Pellapra to M. Teste to procure his accession to the measures desired by the com-

* "January 14, 1842.—Notre affaire dépendra donc des personnes qui se trouvent maintenant au pouvoir. Il n'y a pas un moment à perdre; il n'y a pas à hésiter sur les moyens de nous créer un appui intéressé au sein même du conseil. J'ai les moyens d'arriver presque à cet appui; c'est à vous d'aviser aux moyens de l'intéresser. N'oubliez pas que le Gouvernement est dans des mains avides et corrompues, que la liberté de la presse court risque d'être étranglée sans bruit un de ces jours, et que jamais le bon droit n'eut plus besoin de protection." January 26, 1842.—"Je passe ma vie au milieu des disputes. Je vais chez la plupart des Ministres, dont je crois utile au succès de notre affaire de cultiver l'amitié." February 3, 1842.—"La société doit avoir aussi pour objet de fixer le nombre d'actions qui devra être mis à notre disposition pour intéresser sans mise de fonds, les appuis qui seraient indispensables au succès de cette affaire."—*Procès Parmentier*, 72, 75, and REGNAULT, iii. 243, 244; *Presse*, May 2, 1847.

CHAP. XLVII.

1847.

pany in the concession of a mine. It was sworn to by the notary of M. Pellapra that this had been confessed to him in confidence by his client, and this was admitted as evidence *against M. Teste*, contrary to what would have been decided in Great Britain. This statement of the notary, however, was confirmed by two written documents which proved the payment of the money. Upon this

July 13.

M. Teste withdrew his defence, by a letter to the President of the Court of Peers; and the evidence being considered satisfactory against the others, they were all found guilty —General Cubières, M. Teste, and M. Parmentier on the evidence, and M. Pellapra, in absence, or *par contumace*. General Cubières and M. Parmentier were found guilty of having bribed a Minister to obtain the concession of a mine from the Government to a company in which they were interested, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment, and a fine of 10,000 francs (£400) each, as was M. Pellapra, who surrendered a few days after. M. Teste was found guilty of having, when a minister, in 1842 and 1843, accepted bribes for acts to be done by him in his official capacity, and sentenced to a fine of 94,000 francs (£3760), being the bribe received, and to three years' imprisonment, with civil degradation.[1]

[1] Moniteur, July 18, and July 23, 1847; Regnault, iii. 260, 261; Ann. Hist. xxx. 241, 243.

13. Murder of the Duchess of Praslin. Aug. 18, 1847.

These scandalous revelations seemed almost to justify the words of M. de Lamartine: "Yes, a revolution is approaching, and it is the revolution of contempt." But the public attention was soon arrested by a still more terrible event, which involved the Peerage in the opprobrium of a detestable crime. On the morning of the 18th August, Madame the Duchess de Praslin was found murdered in her bedroom in her own hotel in Paris. Suspicion from the very first lighted on the duke her husband, the representative of the ancient and noble house of Choiseul-Praslin, one of the most illustrious in France. The duke was in his forty-second year, and had been made a peer of France in the creation on 6th April 1845. The duchess, three years younger, was the only daughter of Marshal

Sébastiani. So suspicious were the circumstances, that, although his privilege as a peer protected M. de Praslin at first from arrest, he was put under the *surveillance* of an officer of police, and detained in his own hotel.[1] At four in the morning of the 18th, the violent ringing of bells had been heard in the apartment of the duchess; the servants, in consternation, hastened to the doors, which they found all locked inside, but they heard the noise of a violent struggle, accompanied by shrieks and calls of assistance from the duchess within. Unable to force the door, they, in an agony of terror, went round by the duke's room, and, to their astonishment, found the door leading from it to the duchess's apartment open. On entering, they found the unhappy victim bathed in blood. Soon after, the duke entered coming from his own room, and asked what was the cause of the tumult? Upon being shown the body of the duchess, he said only, "Poor woman! who is the monster who has assassinated her?"[2]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 19, 1847; Regnault, iii. 261, 271; Ann. Hist. xxx. 244, 246.

[2] Ut supra.

14. Details of the catastrophe, and its termination.

The sequel of the tragedy was not less terrible. It appeared that a young lady named De Luzy, who had been a governess in England, in a family of rank, had entered the duke's family in 1841, to superintend the education of his daughters. She was recommended by Madame de Flahault. Mademoiselle de Luzy, who possessed considerable talents, great address, and no small turn for management and intrigue, ere long acquired the complete command of the duke, while at the same time, by the most respectful demeanour, and the strict observance of all the rules of decorum, she long soothed the feelings and suppressed the jealousy of the duchess. Over the children her influence soon became unbounded; they looked upon her as more than mother. This anomalous state of things continued for several years, chiefly in consequence of the singular prudence and address of Mademoiselle de Luzy; but at length the duchess, seeing herself estranged both from the duke and her children, and reduced to a

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

cipher in her own house, became melancholy and low-spirited, and several violent scenes took place between her and her husband. Her secret griefs exhaled in correspondence with her confidential friends, but external appearances were kept up, and they continued to live together. The duchess, after she had seriously taken the alarm, at first sought distraction in the pleasures of society, but she speedily found that they afforded no consolation to a wounded spirit, and she had recourse to books of religion. At length, on the recommendation of Marshal Sébastiani, Mademoiselle de Luzy, to prevent a separation, left the house, and a sort of forced reconciliation took place between the duke and duchess; but the foreign influence still continued. Mademoiselle de Luzy and he corresponded clandestinely, and a project of marriage, if the duchess was only out of the way, was entertained between them. Hitherto their friendship, how tender soever, had been entirely Platonic. On the 17th August the duke and duchess returned together with the children from Praslin to Paris, and separated at the barrier—the duke, with his three daughters, going to visit Mademoiselle de Luzy, from whence they returned in the evening to his hotel. At four in the following morning the catastrophe took place. Presumptive evidence being so decidedly against the duke, an ordinance directing his arrest was signed on the 21st, at the Château d'Eu, and on the same day he was brought before the Chancellor of the Peers, in the Palace of the Luxembourg. "You know," said the Chancellor, "the frightful crime with which you are charged, and the circumstances which appear so strong against you. You need not enter into details: it is enough to say yes or no." He replied: "Great strength is required to say either yes or no. I do not possess enough." He was observed to turn pale, and soon after he was taken violently ill, and breathed his last on the morning of the 24th. He had taken poison immediately after being first arrested, and thus by his death supplied the last link in the evidence of his guilt.[1]

Aug. 21.

1 Moniteur, Aug. 25, 1847; Regnault, iii. 270, 272; Ann. Hist. xxx. 245, 247.

Use made of these abuses by the Revolutionists.

It is observed by the able annalist whose narrative has thrown so much light on the last years of the reign of Louis Philippe, that the great difficulty which has been experienced in establishing the parliamentary regime in France, arises from each party directing its efforts to the supplanting a rival from power, without the slightest regard to the public good, or the changes which were likely to advance it. Never had this evil, inherent in all constitutional monarchies in a certain degree, but pre-eminently conspicuous in France, from the absence of any check from a paramount feeling of patriotism, been so widespread and pernicious as it was at this moment. A universal feeling of uneasiness, disquietude, and dissatisfaction prevailed, and each party in the State strove to augment the discontent thence arising, in hopes to profit by it. The severe scarcity which had prevailed for nearly two years had caused the working classes to feel almost the evils of famine; the monetary crisis, which had followed in its train, had caused the distress to spread to the middle class, for long so prosperous, and with justice esteemed the firmest support of the throne. The foreign policy of M. Guizot had incurred the displeasure of the Liberals, who desired that France should place itself at the head of every revolutionary movement in Europe: the English alliance was a continual subject of complaint to the Imperialists, who had never forgiven Waterloo and the fall of the Empire. The chiefs of all the parties, seeing the minds of men thus disposed, entered into a virtual coalition to push the Government to extremities, by taking advantage of the ill-humours which were afloat; and the common cause on which they were to unite their forces was PARLIAMENTARY REFORM. This topic was chosen for the war-cry, because it was likely, if successful, to lead to a change in the ruling power in the Chamber of Deputies, from which all the three parties, the Republicans, the Royalists, and the Imperialists, hoped, strange to say, to profit.[1] Whether it did so or not, it would at

[1] Cassagnac, Dernières Années de Louis Philippe, i. 94, 96; Regnault, iii. 276, 278.

CHAP. XLVII.

1847.

16. Cry for Parliamentary Reform.

least overturn the common enemy of all, the Citizen King and the bourgeois-elected legislature.

To a people thus agitated, and chiefs thus determined, it may easily be figured what a fortunate circumstance the scandals which had come to light regarding the corruption of the electors, and the prostitution of power itself and official persons to venal influences, would immediately prove. Advantage, accordingly, was immediately taken of the unhappy occurrences which have been mentioned, to inflame the general discontent into a violent passion. Would you see, said they, what were the influences which operated with even the highest functionaries of Government?—look at the revelations regarding cabinet ministers in the "*Procès* Cubières, Teste." Would you know what sort of functionaries they put in situations of trust and emolument, and by what means they had so long secured the support of a corrupt and venal Legislature?—read the evidence in the "*Procès* Rochefort," and the unprosecuted charges in the *Presse* regarding the public sale of honours. The Praslin murder and suicide have sufficiently demonstrated what are the morals even of the highest classes of the aristocracy, and how vain it is to hope for any regeneration of society from its ascendancy. And to what purpose does the King wield the powers of the crown, the forces of the army, the influence of government?—to maintain a system of resistance which is insupportable in an age of advancing intelligence, and uphold a Ministry which, justly obnoxious to the vast majority of the nation, is obstinately set upon holding the reins of power, in order to perpetuate the reign of venality and corruption by which it has so long profited.[1] Strong in the support of the King, the peers, the army, and a decided majority of the deputies, it has hitherto successfully resisted every effort for its overthrow; and it is now sufficiently evident that it can never be removed, or France enjoy the blessings which the Revolution should have brought in its train, till, by a

[1] Cassagnac, i. 100, 103; Regnault, iii. 276, 277; Circulaire du Comité de la Gauche, June 30, 1846.

change in the composition of the Chamber of Deputies, a different influence is made to govern the State.

1847. 17. Discontent of the National Guard.

What gave the Liberal chiefs the most sanguine hopes of success in their crusade against the Government was the notorious and widespread discontent of the National Guard, especially of Paris. The important share which that numerous and influential body, which numbered fifty thousand armed men in its legions in the metropolis alone, had had in bringing about the Revolution of 1830, and subsequently maintaining the Citizen King on the throne, was fresh in every recollection, and it was equally well known to every historical student that, in every important crisis since 1789, it had failed at the decisive moment, and either by its irresolution ruined the Government, or by its treason overturned it. Great reliance was placed by the Liberal leaders on the now undisguised discontent of the Parisian National Guard, and it was confidently hoped that, if matters came to extremities, it would either refuse to act against the people, or openly join their ranks. In truth, this important body, which had made the Revolution of 1830, was discontented, as all forgers of revolutions are, when it found that the command of the Government had slipped out of its hands, and got into those of a majority of the Chamber, elected by the proprietors of all France. During the last years of the reign of Louis Philippe, the discontent of these armed Prætorians had become such, in consequence of the incessant action upon them of the revolutionary press, that they considered themselves superior both to the Sovereign and the Legislature. The King did not venture to review them, from apprehension of a public manifestation of those sentiments; and to the former pressure, arising from the dread of tumults in the capital, had succeeded the influence, far more dangerous, of an armed force in its bosom, which pretended to substitute its caprices and passions for the deliberate expression of the national will

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

by the Chamber. The electoral returns for Paris, for many years past, proved that the temper of the great majority of the citizens was decidedly Liberal, and that hostility to the Government was very widespread among them. Upon the co-operation of the National Guard in Paris more reliance was placed by the Liberal chiefs than on any other circumstance; and the result proved that their expectations were not overcharged.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 102, 104, 107.

18. Coalition of parties against the Government, and measures agreed on.

A ruling and directing power, already organised, existed in Paris for the regulation of the projected movement against the Government. This consisted in a central committee, established in 1845, to direct the elections in the metropolis, which excited great interest at that time, and had never yet been dissolved. M. Odillon Barrot, who was at the head of the movement, solicited their co-operation and support, which was immediately and willingly promised. A general meeting of all the Liberal chiefs took place, at which there were present M. Thiers, Duvergier de Hauranne, Garnier Pagès, Carnot, Gustave de Beaumont, Pagnerre, Barrot, Recourt, and Labédoyère. The Republicans made no attempt then to conceal their ulterior objects after displacing the ministry; but such was the anxiety of the constitutional opposition, headed by M. Thiers and Odillon Barrot, to get possession of the government, that they did not hesitate to join with them, on the perfect understanding that they were to adopt legal measures alone, as long as the ministry remained in power, but that, as soon as this ceased, the alliance was to be understood as closed, and each might pursue its own course, though in direct opposition to the other. This is proved by the testimony of the secretary to the Banquet Committee.* It was agreed

* "Il n'y eut de part et d'autre division aucune. Les Radicaux disaient à MM. Odillon Barrot et Duvergier de Hauranne: *'Aujourd'hui notre but unique est de vous faire arriver au pouvoir*, et pour cela nous nous maintiendrons dans le cercle légal; mais, après avoir une fois obtenu les réformes qui s'accordent avec notre triomphe, *nous nous réservons de demander au delà*. Nous ne transigeons avec aucun de nos principes; nous faisons seulement trève à quelques exigences qui seraient aujourd'hui inopportunes, mais que nous nous promettons

that the war-cry against the Government was to be the demand for parliamentary reform, as the most likely one to unite all parties, seeing the ministerial majority in the elective Chamber was the chief impediment to the gratification of the ambitious designs of the leaders of them all. To further this object, a very able petition to the Chamber of Deputies was drawn up by M. Pagnerre, craving a reform in the electoral law, which is very valuable, as containing an exposition of the grounds on which this important demand was supported by the ablest of the Liberal party in France.* And it was determined to proceed by speeches at public banquets convened in all parts of France, because, as that species of agitation had not been foreseen, from not having been previously adopted, there were fewer legal restrictions on it than attempts to excite the people in any other way.[1]

[1] Elie Regnault, Histoire du Gouv. Provisoire, 21, 22; Cassagnac, i. 152, 153; Regnault, iii. 277.

Having determined on the banquet agitation, the Liberal chiefs lost no time in putting their designs in execution. The first banquet was held on July 10, in a large

de faire valoir plus tard : *Notre alliance doit cesser avec notre victoire, alors vous nous retrouverez en face de vous.' Le pacte fut conclu en ces termes et accepté sans restriction.*"—ELIE REGNAULT, *Histoire du Gouvernement Provisoire*, p. 21. (Secrétaire du Comité du Banquet).

* "Nous demandons la Réforme de la loi du 19 April 1831, dans ses dispositions électorales et parlementaires :—

"1. Parceque, après une expérience de seize années, l'épreuve de six élections générales en ont surabondamment démontré les vices et l'impuissance.

"2. Parcequ'elle ne s'appuie sur aucun principe ; qu'elle les viole tous.

"3. Parcequ'elle n'a de base suffisamment rationnelle ni sur la population, ni sur les contributions, ni sur l'aptitude politique, ni sur la capacité intellectuelle.

"4. Parcequ'elle est contraire au principe même du Gouvernement représentatif, qui veut que la majorité des députés soit le produit de la majorité des électeurs, soit l'expression de la majorité des citoyens.

"5. Parcequ'elle a créé une autorité spéciale qui fractionne à l'infini les colléges électoraux, qui constitue entre le plus grand nombre une inégalité choquante, qui donne aux intérêts locaux une prédominance exclusive sur les intérêts généraux et qui enlève à l'élu le caractère de député du pays du département ou même de l'arrondissement, pour en faire le représentant subalterne de quelques groupes d'électeurs.

"6. Parcequ'elle fait des petits colléges autant de bourgs pourris toujours à la disposition d'un fonctionnaire en crédit, d'une famille bien placée ou d'un gros capitaliste ; là, l'électorat n'est plus un mandat politique le premier de tous, que l'électeur, au jour donné, accomplit selon ses con-

CHAP. XLVII.

1847.

19. Commencement of the banquet agitation. July 10.

room usually devoted to dancing-parties at the Château Rouge, near Clignancourt, in the neighbourhood of Paris, where about a thousand persons assembled, the majority being electors, with a considerable number of deputies. M. Ledru-Rollin refused to attend, lest he should be compromised by some act savouring too much of loyalty to the throne. The speeches delivered were abundantly violent, though not nearly so much so as they afterwards became, when the public passions were more strongly excited, and impunity had increased the hardihood of the speakers. M. Odillon Barrot said: "Let us not charge against our glorious Revolution the miseries of our actual political situation. They have arrived at the shameful spectacle, which we all feel so afflicting, not by governing according to the principles of our Revolution, but in opposition to them; by falsifying all its principles, and departing from all the conditions which it imposed. Is there any one who now doubts this? Is there any one of any party who has not long since opened his eyes to

victions, mais un titre permanent, une fonction privilégiée, dont il croit pouvoir sans déshonneur tirer un profit personnel.

"7. Parcequ'elle tend à reconstituer, ainsi que l'a dit un ministre de la Révolution, une aristocratie intrigante et besogneuse.

"8. Parcequ'elle méconnait le principe de l'égalité des droits entre les citoyens; qu'elle viole le principe de l'égalité des droits même entre les électeurs.

"9. Parcequ'elle ne protège pas suffisamment la grandeur et la liberté des élections, qui presque partout présentent le spectacle scandaleux de misérables intrigues, de petites passions, de luttes personelles dont l'intérêt national est seul exclu.

"10. Parcequ'elle a éteint le mouvement politique qui est la vie même des gouvernements constitutionnels.

"11. Parcequ'en renfermant dans d'étroites limites la liberté du choix des électeurs par le cours d'éligibilité et la gratuité du Mandat, elle favorise l'envahissement de la Chambre par les fonctionnaires publics salariés, frappant ainsi du même coup la hiérarchie administrative et l'indépendance de la représentation, et substituant à l'action constitutionnelle du gouvernement parlementaire l'influence du gouvernement personnel.

"12. Parcequ'elle restreint le nombre des députés et celui des électeurs à un chiffre qui n'est pas en rapport avec la population; ouvre une large porte à la corruption, et parceque la nation ne saurait trouver dans le corps électoral tel qu'il est aujourd'hui constitué la représentation sincère de ses opinions, de ses intérêts et de ses droits."

the consequences of that system which we have never ceased to combat during seventeen years? Are the scandals we have witnessed not great enough? Let us, however, not be unjust. The Government alone is not to blame. Let us examine our own conduct. Let us not ascribe everything to others, to causes which are not the only, or even the real ones. The root of the evil is to be found in the code of public morals, in the estrangement which we all have instinctively, and from the old habits of the monarchy, from what is required to satisfy the true conditions of liberty. France is still mistress of her destiny; and every desponding feeling, as every senseless resentment, is a direct injury to her. Permit me, then, while invoking the memories of our Revolution of 1830, of that new, and I trust final, consecration of the national sovereignty, and reviving the sentiments which then animated us all, to propose, 'To the Revolution of July.'" The toast was drank with enthusiasm, the company all standing, and accompanying in chorus the strains of the Marseillaise, performed by a splendid orchestra.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 283, 284; Id., Hist. du Gouv. Prov., 22; Cassagnac, i. 153.

20. Duvergier de Hauranne's speech.

M. Duvergier de Hauranne, on the same occasion, said: "Have we any need to prove that, after the lapse of twenty years, the same situation reproduces itself with the same duties and the same dangers? Assuredly, between the Government of the last years of the Restoration and the existing Government, there are profound differences, but striking resemblances, which must strike the least clear-sighted. The lesson of 1830 has been of some advantage, and men do not twice in twenty years commit the same follies. The Restoration, to arrive at its end, took the high-road, and advanced in a very ostentatious manner. The existing Government, more modest, seeks to reach the same point by bypaths and advancing on tiptoe. In other words, what the Restoration proposed to effect by force and menaces, the existing power endeavours to effect by cunning and corruption. Our institutions are no longer openly broken; they are undermined. Consciences are

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

no longer violated, they are bought. Do you think that is an exchange for the better? I think it is decidedly for the worse. For liberty the danger is equally great, if not greater; and by the new system, morality is buried in the same grave as freedom. Can you, then, regard as mere accidents all those disorders, all those scandals, which have carried shame and confusion into the breasts of all honourable men? No, gentlemen! These disorders and scandals are not accidents; they are the necessary and inevitable consequence of the perverse policy which governs us—of that policy which, feeling itself too weak to enslave France, is striving to corrupt it. As long as that system endures, the scandal will continue and increase. If that is not clear, nothing in this world is so."[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 287, 288.

21. M. de Lamartine's speech at Maçon. Sept. 20, 1847.

At Maçon, a large crowd assembled to listen to the eloquent words of M. de Lamartine, who attended a banquet in that city, for which he was deputy. He openly announced the approaching downfall of the Government. "If," said he, "the Government deceives the hopes which the country has placed, in 1830, less in its nature than in its name—if, in the pride of its constitutional elevation, it seeks to isolate itself—if it fails to incorporate itself entirely with the spirit and legitimate interests of the masses—if it surrounds itself by an electoral aristocracy instead of the entire people—if it distrusts the people organised in the civic militia, and disarms them by degrees as a conquered enemy—if it caresses the military spirit, at once so necessary and so dangerous to civil freedom—if, without attempting openly to violate the rights of the nation, it seeks to corrupt it, and to acquire, under the name of liberty, a despotism so much the more dangerous that it has been purchased under the cloak of freedom—if it has succeeded in making of a nation of citizens a vile band of beggars, who have only inherited liberties purchased by the blood of their fathers to put them up to auction to the highest bidder—if it has caused France to blush for its public functionaries, and has allowed her to descend, as we have seen in a recent

trial, in the scale of corruption till it has arrived at its tragedies—if it has permitted the nation to be afflicted, humiliated, by the improbity of those in authority—if it has done these things, that royalty will fall, rest assured of that! It will not slip in the blood it has shed, as that of 1789 did, but it will fall into the snare which itself had dug! And after having had the revolution of blood, and the counter-revolution of glory, you will have the revolution of public conscience, and that springing from contempt."[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 201, 202.

22. Efforts of the Liberals to keep back the Socialists.

The violence of some of these speeches, which were re-echoed from all the chief manufacturing towns, and some of the rural districts of France, excited no small terror in the holders of property, who were more aware than the Government of the point to which things were tending, and of the intimate connection between the overthrow of the present Government and the triumph of Socialist and Communist principles. Aware of the danger of such an idea being generally entertained, and of the damp which it would throw over their efforts in favour of reform and ministerial change merely, M. Thiers and the constitutional opposition laboured assiduously to convince the public that this danger was entirely chimerical, and that the Communists were nothing but a trifling unimportant minority, from whom no risk whatever was to be apprehended. Even M. Marrast, destined ere long to be one of the most dangerous leaders of this heated band of enthusiasts, published, on 20th September, the strongest statement as to the Socialists being "an imperceptible band of extravagants, who were content to have, instead of children, numbered mannikins." In truth, however, the danger was far from imaginary; for, though the numbers of the extreme Radicals were very small, and the persons who attended the banquets put together were only 17,000 in all France, yet they comprehended the most active and dangerous portion of the community, and the one which exercised the most widespread influence over general

CHAP. XLVII.

1847.

opinion. The effects of their declamations appeared before the end of autumn, in the increased audacity and undisguised revolutionary character of the language used at the banquets. At Orléans, M. Marié openly spoke of a Republic; at Limoges, they preached Communism; at Dijon, the red flag was hoisted; at Lille, M. Ledru-Rollin prophetically announced the overflowing of the Nile, "which, in its impetuous course, would sweep away all impurities, and leave in its course the seeds of fertility and new life." Thus though the number of those banded together for extreme measures was small, they professed doctrines of all others the most seductive to the working classes; and the whole question was reduced to this, whether on a crisis they would enroll themselves under the banners of chiefs professing these principles.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i 155, 157; Regnault, iii. 201, 204; Regnault, Hist. du Gouv. Prov., 24, 25.

23. M. de Lamartine's ulterior views.

Already it was evident that a serious division had arisen among the Reformers, and that in their united ranks were to be found many who were inclined not to stop short with a change of ministry, or even dynasty, but aimed at an entire subversion and remodelling of society. M. de Lamartine, in particular, who, gifted with splendid genius, and moved by a feeling heart, was utterly ignorant of mankind, and saw everything through the Claude Lorraine atmosphere of his own enthusiastic fancy, cautiously kept aloof from the other reform banquets, and reserved himself for his own at Maçon, when he brought forward, for the first time, the Socialist principles which ere long shook France to its centre when proclaimed from the seat of Government. "What," said he, "do we ask of the Government of July as the condition of rendering it a sincere assistance? The dynasty with no other privilege than the throne; the King's inviolability; *social fraternity in principles and institutions;* a budget commensurate to the liberality which the State should dispense; a minister of public beneficence; a ministry of the people's life-blood. Let the Government enter into these views, and we will

support it, whether it is headed by one wearing a crown, a tiara, or a hat." At this time, this celebrated author published what has been justly called his "Romance of the *History of the Girondists*"—a work which contains more truths than is generally supposed, but so enveloped in the colours of imagination that it has already come to pass for fiction. At the time, however, it produced an immense impression, and powerfully contributed to the crisis which was approaching, by representing Revolutionists in the most interesting colours, and making heroes of those whose main object was to overturn the throne. At the same time, in the journal published at Maçon, he openly announced his principles in these words: "Are you factious?—go and conspire in darkness. Are you Communists?—come and applaud at the banquet at Maçon."[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 158, 161; Journal Le Bien Public, Maçon, Nov. 4, 1847; Lamartine, Hist. de la Révolution, 1848, i. 30.

24. Decline of the banquet agitation in the end of the year.

Notwithstanding this powerful assistance, the agitation produced by the banquets seriously declined before the end of the year 1847. The movement spread, indeed, into the provinces, and every considerable town in France had its meeting; but there was, with the exception of the capital, and one or two great commercial towns, none of the general enthusiasm which bespeaks a great national movement. Curiosity to hear M. Odillon Barrot, M. de Lamartine, or any other celebrated orator who had long been before the public, was the principal inducement which brought the inhabitants of the rural districts to the banquets. "No one can believe," says Regnault, their secretary, "to what an extent the banquet agitation was fictitious and superficial. To appreciate it, one would require to examine the correspondence of the central committee. There would be seen what difficulties the organisation of the provincial banquets presented. The chief magnet which attracted the provincial electors was curiosity to see a distinguished deputy. As M. Odillon Barrot was then filling the journals with his speeches, every provincial town insisted on having him in their turn.[2] But he could not be everywhere at

[2] Regnault, Hist. du Gouv. Prov., 24; Cassagnac, i. 154, 155.

CHAP. XLVII. 1847.

once, and therefore the central committee offered other names of more or less attraction, and measured them out according to the weight and quality of the applicants."

25. Meeting of the Chambers, and King's Speech. Dec. 28.

The Chamber met on the 28th December, and from the importance of the questions, both foreign and domestic, which were agitating the public mind, the Royal Speech was looked forward to with great anxiety by all parties. It contained, however, even less than is usually to be met with in such state papers, and touched lightly on the matters likely to excite a discussion in the Chambers. With a faltering voice the King said in the LAST speech he ever addressed to the Chamber: "My relations with all foreign powers inspire the hope that the peace of the world is secured. I hope that the progress of general civilisation may be accomplished everywhere by the consent of the Governments among each other, without altering the pacific relations or internal situation of the people. Civil war has disturbed Switzerland. My Government has come to an understanding with those of England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, to offer to that friendly and neighbouring people a benevolent mediation. Switzerland, I trust, will feel convinced that a respect for the rights of all, and the maintenance of the basis of the Helvetic Confederacy, can alone secure the duration of that happiness and safety which Europe was desirous of securing to her by the existing treaties. In the midst of the agitation which *hostile and blind passions* have fostered, one conviction has animated and supported me; it is, that we possess in the constitutional monarchy, in the union of the three powers of the State, the most effectual means of surmounting all our difficulties, and of providing for all the moral and material interests of our dear country. Let us firmly maintain, in the spirit of the Charter, the social order, and all its conditions. Let us faithfully guarantee, according to the Charter, the public liberties and their developments.[1] Then shall we transmit uninjured to generations yet to come the

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 29, 1847; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 2, 3.

sacred deposit which has been intrusted to us, and they will bless us for having founded and defended the edifice under the shelter of which they will live prosperous and happy."

26. Discussion on the Address. Jan. 1848.

So strongly were the Liberal chiefs bent on making domestic reform the *cheval de bataille* for the session, that, notwithstanding the well-known bent of the nation to objects of foreign interest, and the existing topics which the agitated state of Italy and Switzerland presented, it was determined to have the whole discussion on the part of the speech which referred to domestic affairs. As usual on such occasions in France, the debate turned on the retention or rejection of certain words in the Address which was to be an answer to the Speech. The amendment, proposed by M. Desmousseaux de Gevré, an old conservative, retained nearly the whole Address, with the words "hostile and blind" applied to the passions of the agitators. The retention or rejection of these words was not in itself very material, but it was selected as the point for the trial of strength against the Government, and the whole force of the Liberals of all shades was put forth in the course of the debate. Each distinguished leader was assigned, like generals in the field, his own part, and the onset of the whole was not a little formidable.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxxi. 5, 9.

27. Affair of M. Petit.

The discussion began on the 17th January in the Chamber of Deputies. Another scandal had recently come to light in the appointment of a M. Petit to a Government appointment at Corbeil, in consideration of a retired allowance of 6000 francs (£240) a-year to the wife of the functionary who withdrew to make way for the appointment. The thing was noways blamable in itself, and is often done by the most upright persons in Great Britain, as the only means of getting quit of an incapable functionary. It was made, however, in the excited feelings of the French at that period, the subject of vehement invective against the Government. "Do you," said M. Odillon Barrot, "call that a trifling affair

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

when you, the chief of the Cabinet, who represent a great and noble country, said to a man, 'We have need of a resignation,' and then conferring a place or a title in exchange for the money promised or deposited? Do you style base negotiations, disgraceful undertakings, intrigues which will not bear the light going on at your very door, in your Cabinet, under your eyes, mere trifles? Well may it be said, we have no longer any clear understanding on subjects of public morality."

28. Speech of M. Thiers.

M. Thiers opened the attack on the financial state of the country. "Every year," said he, "we are told, and with truth, that the public receipts are increasing; but of what avail is that, when the national expenditure is swelling in a still greater proportion? This is continually going on; never does a budget come out showing an equilibrium between them. The current expenses now are never under 1,600,000,000 francs, and as the receipts are never so considerable, it becomes every year indispensable to cover the deficit by loans in one form or another, or encroachments on the sinking-fund. It is only by the most flagrant irregularities that you can conceal a financial embarrassment which is every day becoming more serious. This is not all. To the ordinary and extraordinary budget, which invariably succeeds it, you must add the floating debt, which now has swelled to the enormous amount of 720,000,000 francs. What a situation for a country to be in! To pay off during peace, in order to be able to borrow when the necessities of war recur, has been the invariable policy of the wisest statesmen in all ages and countries. Instead of that, what are we doing? Not only do we pay off nothing, contribute nothing to the sinking-fund during a long peace, but every year we add largely to the floating debt; and already it is proposed to have regular loans, if not every year, at least at very short intervals, in order to provide, at fixed dates, for the liquidation of the new debt contracted every year. Such conduct is nothing

less than running directly counter to every principle: and it is no temporary expedient; it has gone on so long, and led to such results, that it has evidently become a fixed part of the policy of Government. To what must finances administered in such a manner lead? To a frightful catastrophe. The rumour of a war, the menace of a revolution, a fresh dearth of subsistence, even lesser misfortunes, may bring all the State creditors upon it at once, and the State would be unable to satisfy their just demands. Matters are even worse than is here presented. The State has borrowed 200,000,000 francs from the savings banks, which, on a crisis, would instantly be demanded. Then the public debt, instantly exigible, is no less than 950,000,000 francs. National bankruptcy is inevitable, if any considerable part of these creditors should present their obligations for payment."

29. Speech of M. de Tocqueville.

"The public morals," said M. de Tocqueville, "are degraded, and the private morals have come too closely to resemble the public. The governing class has set the most deplorable example. It possesses the most precious of gifts, that of choosing freely the representatives of the country; and when it is called upon to exercise this right, it degrades it, degrades itself, by prostituting a noble privilege to the most contemptible interests. The feelings of morality have vanished; electors and elected, functionaries high and low, have no other object but the augmentation of their private fortunes. It is a humiliating spectacle! France had exhibited to the world, in the midst of the first Revolution, the principles which she maintained were to regenerate the world; and now Europe, attentive to all the movements of the French mind, asks if these principles were not a dangerous seed; if the fruit they have produced is not the ruin of morals; and if a traditional servitude is not a better state for the conscience than the liberty for which so many sacrifices have been made.

"If the spectacle we are exhibiting is calculated to

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

30. Continued.

produce such an effect upon Europe, when seen from afar, what effect do you suppose it must produce in France itself upon the classes which are not represented? We are told there is no danger, because there is no insurrection; that, as there is no disorder on the material surface of society, the revolutions are still distant. Doubtless disorder is not as yet in fact, but it is deeply so in thought. Look at those working classes, who, I admit, are tranquil. It is true, they are not tormented by political passions to the extent that they once were; but do you not see that their passions, their political views, have become Social? Do you not see that the opinion is by degrees spreading and taking root among them, that it is necessary to overturn, not this or that law, this or that ministry, this or that government, but to change society itself, and uproot the foundations on which it now rests? And do you not believe that, when such opinions come to be generally diffused among them, and they have descended far into the masses, they will induce, sooner or later, I know not where, I know not how, the most fearful revolutions? Such, gentlemen, is my profound conviction; I believe that we are sleeping even now on the surface of a volcano. Such is my unalterable conviction."

31. Speech of M. Billault.

"So notorious," said M. Billault, "are these facts, that no one ventures to deny them, or dispute the daily and rapid degeneracy of public morals. All that the ministerial supporters can say is, that it is not their doing, and that they are charged with a responsibility arising from the acts of others. But if it is so, were they not the first to set the example? Have we not seen Cabinet Ministers prosecuted and condemned by the Court of Peers; high functionaries, friends of the Ministers, protected by them or their subordinates, when surprised in disgraceful acts at Paris, Clermont, Rochefort, Gros-Caillon? Have we not heard the editor of a public journal declare that he received five thousand francs a-month to celebrate, in eloquent prose, the merits of the

Ministry, and declaim against their adversaries? Have we not seen the privileges of theatres given away for money; public offices made the subject of traffic; Ministers offering other places in lieu of conditional dismissals; deputies deprived of their situations on account of conscientious votes; others promised high office for complaisant votes; besides innumerable other acts of the same kind, which are only mentioned in whispers because no one ventures to bring them forward publicly? No one is ignorant that the Minister is the author of all these corruptions; they have been so often proved, that no one thinks of any longer contesting it."

32. Of M. de Lamartine.

"Turn," said M. de Lamartine, "to foreign affairs and see whether the Government has more conformed to the national will in them than in domestic government. Has M. Guizot not heard the maledictions, loud and long, of so many noble and generous men now abandoned to the mercy of a ferocious enemy? He has heard them; but what has he done to save them from destruction? Was he ignorant of the ardent sympathies of the French people for the sacred cause of Italian independence? M. Guizot cannot have abandoned his own principles; he cannot in secret approve his own actions. But he is bound, hand and foot, at the feet of Austria; he groans under the servitude which he has voluntarily incurred, but he cannot shake it off. To bring about what he deemed an advantageous marriage for one of his sons, Louis Philippe broke the alliance which he had contracted, the day following the Revolution of 1830, between France and England, the two great constitutional states; he then, for the sake of other alliances, permitted Austria to confiscate the town and territory of Cracow, the last corner in which a great and noble people have found refuge; he even permitted the same power to push forward into the centre of Italy, and occupy the roads leading to Rome, Florence, and Turin. All this proves that the Government of the King has abandoned the secular

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

interests of France, its permanent advantage, even its honour, to the most miserable family advantage—to a dowry, a connection, a miserable consideration. From the day when you entered into the Spanish alliance, all your foreign acts have been contrary to your real interests. From that day everything has been adverse to nature. You have been obliged to say that the Sunderbund was national in Switzerland, that the Diet was a faction. From that day it was necessary that France, inverting the order of nature, inverting the maxims and traditions of ages, should become Ghibeline at Rome, priest-ridden at Berne, Austrian in Piedmont, Russian at Cracow, nowhere French, everywhere counter-revolutionary."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 18-25, and Feb. 6, 1848; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 14, 21.

33. M. Duchâtel's answer.

It was no easy matter for any man, be his abilities what they might, to make head against a phalanx of such talent, now all directed against one single head. Guizot's courage and talents, however, were equal to the trial, and he was ably supported by M. Duchâtel, the Minister of the Interior. "We are told," said the latter, "incessantly of the deficit and the amount of the floating debt. It is no doubt true that the budgets from 1840 to 1843 were made up in part of loans and anticipations—that was the sad bequest of the Ministry of 1846 (M. Thiers's), for whose prodigality we are not responsible. The budgets of 1844 and 1845 added nothing to the public debt in any shape. The same cannot be said of those of 1846 and 1847, but that was because those years were marked by scourges of nature which do not occur twice in any generation. After all, how were these deficits filled up in those disastrous years? With the reserves of the sinking-fund, and they will discharge them all by the year 1849. To apply the sinking-fund, in part, in this way, is not to burden posterity, for the entire sum so applied is drawn from present resources. It is true, it prevents the paying off of debt, but it does nothing to augment it. In a word, in the year 1849 all the charges will be met by ordinary resources and the aid derived from

the sinking-fund—a state of things almost identical with what it was in 1839. And with this budget we have increased the effective ranks of the army, enlarged the arsenals, repaired the fortifications of strong places, multiplied tenfold the furnishings for the army and navy, conquered a continent, and established a durable colonial possession.

34. Continued.

"This is what we have done with the ordinary budget. There remains, it is true, the extraordinary budget; but in regard to that, is it not just that posterity should bear the principal part of those burdens which are to benefit it more than the present generation? It is on that principle that the extraordinary budget is founded, which constitutes the chief part of the floating debt which is now represented as so alarming, and which has arisen principally from the great expenditure on the public works which have been set on foot, How were those extraordinary undertakings to be met? Could any objection have been made to such undertakings, the burden of which is instant, while their benefit is future, being executed by means of loans? And is it more open to exception, because, instead of doing so, it was determined to meet it by the reserves of the sinking-fund not required for the ordinary budget, and in the mean time to provide for it by means of exchequer bills? The apprehensions so strongly felt on this subject are greatly exaggerated, if not entirely imaginary. The floating debt has by no means attained the gigantic proportions which are assigned to it. In order to magnify its amount, as in the end of 1848, M. Thiers has added to it the whole additional credits opened down to that period, and put to the charge of the extraordinary budget. But the credits thus successively opened to meet these extraordinary budgets have not been entirely exhausted at the end of the year for which they were destined; they even run into the next year, and thus figure, in part at least, twice in M. Thiers's estimate. In addition to this, these credits were, for the most part, opened to carry on public works, many

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

of which have become productive, and no account is taken of the amount of these reimbursements. If these deductions are made, it will be found that the amount of the floating debt in the end of 1847 will be 620,000,000 francs. It is true this will receive an addition of 150,000,000 during the course of 1848, but it will be entirely indemnified for this increase by the loan and various reimbursements, which will leave the floating debt at the end of 1848 not greater than it was at the close of the preceding year; and there is every prospect of its amount being still further diminished in succeeding years, from the reserve of the sinking-fund being applied to its liquidation, instead of the public works now in course of construction.

35. Continued.

"We are constantly told of the corrupting influence of power, but every one must see that in a free State the real influence is on the side of Opposition. It is it which, from day to day, directs public opinion. Power is a besieged army, doomed to the most arduous of duties, that of exhibiting courage in defence, and which, by the mere force of things, sees its resources daily diminishing. The Opposition, on the contrary, is a besieging army, in possession of the open country, which is constantly provisioned by complaints, recruited by passions, and which advances to the combat with the feelings of soldiers who are marching to an assured victory. This is the state of things in all constitutional monarchies. But with us the case is much worse. We have lived for ages under a despotic authority, and have contracted the habit of regarding power as the exclusive patrimony of a few, opposition as the patrimony of all. Under a despotic government, the Opposition, when it first arises, attracts all sympathies, because power is awful, and is its enemy, and silences arguments by bastiles. But with us all this is changed: the Opposition has become the real power; but it still enjoys the sympathies which it awakened when it wielded only the sword of honour. Thus is it doubly armed, for it has at once the strength

of a free country, and the sympathies of one whose freedom is only commencing its career.

36. Continued.

"This then is the enormous, the perilous power of which we hear so much; and you tell us that the public morals are corrupted by it. Is it, then, by accident that the people do not read your journals? Is it by accident they do not read your books? Is it by chance that they do not listen to your words in preference to ours? *If the morals are corrupted, it is you who have corrupted them.* Are we the persons who are every day publishing books in which religion is treated as an old prejudice—where the laws of family are set at nought, property treated as an abuse, where history is dressed up in the garb of imagination, where civic crowns are placed on the most guilty heads, where is resuscitated to influence the public passions the maxim so much blamed in former times, that the end will justify the means? I cannot comprehend how the moderate part of the Opposition, men laying claim at least to some degree of prudence and foresight, can render themselves the auxiliaries of a party actuated by nothing but the most extreme revolutionary tactics. In our first political assemblies the authors of this system were its first victims. The melancholy return which we witness to such extreme measures should disgust all parties. In a free country there is no more decisive proof of public immorality than the indulgence at the tribune in words of hatred and animosity.

37. Continued.

"The complaints made on the foreign conduct of Government are, if possible, still more unfounded. It has always been a fundamental principle with the King's Government to cause the neutrality of Switzerland to be respected; but the first condition of such a neutrality is that it should be respected by the Swiss themselves. The inviolability of Helvetia, so precious for the peace of Europe, becomes dangerous to all as soon as the Swiss themselves begin to abuse it. Inviolability is not impunity.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

When the great Powers guaranteed the inviolability of the Swiss territory, they had no intention of establishing a volcano from whence anarchy and disorder were to be incessantly vomited forth upon the neighbouring states. No one can deny that Switzerland has been the central point of all the factions, the refuge of all the revolutionists, the workshop of all the conspiracies, directed against the peace of Europe. M. Thiers himself has well characterised it; for after the attempted assassination of Alibaud in 1836, he said: 'The event of the 25th March gives us additional reason to demand the expulsion of the refugees. France no more than Europe can consent that Switzerland should become the rallying-point of all revolutionists, alike prepared for murder or invasion, with an armed force. If the gentlemen of Berne choose to engage in such follies, France will not support them, but abandon them as lost reprobates.'

38. Concluded.

"As to Italy, the Government of the King has never ceased to endeavour, with an affectionate solicitude, to aid the efforts of the Italian princes who laboured for the regeneration of their country. No sooner was the intelligence received of the Pope's amnesty, than M. Guizot hastened to convey to his holiness the common thanks of Christendom. He declared that he regarded that noble act as the prelude to and pledge for others, which might satisfy public opinion without weakening the authority of the sovereign; and he never ceased to urge the adoption of those reforms, the principle of which had now been adopted. At Florence, as at Rome, he held the same language, that the French Government had no desire to intermeddle with the internal affairs of Italy; but that it was their anxious wish that the Italian governments should themselves set on foot those moderate reforms which the social condition of their people demanded, and which would confirm power by resting it on a wider basis. When Ferrara was occupied by the Imperial troops, M. Guizot did not lose an instant in demanding from the

Imperial Government the re-establishment of the *statu quo;* and it was the influence of France which accelerated the pacific solution of that question. If the Roman and Tuscan people have obtained favourable conditions, and the arms necessary for their national guards, it is from France that they have received them. The uniform language of M. Guizot was that he accepted the Italian revolutions as accomplished facts, but that he would consider himself culpable if he impelled the Italians any farther on the fatal descent on which the revolutionists would drive them—prophetic words! of which the world is even now beginning to feel the truth."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 23, 25, 26, 1848; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 34, 53.

39. Last budget of Louis Philippe.

But whatever face the Finance Minister might put upon the situation of the French finances, the official budgets proved that they were in the most deplorable condition, and that whatever merit the Government of the Citizen King and the bourgeoisie may have possessed, economy is not to be reckoned among the number. Before the debate on the Address was concluded this was decisively proved. The budget brought forward by the Finance Minister, on 3d January 1848, presented a total of expenditure of 1,518,000,000 francs, while the income was only estimated at 1,192,000,000 francs, leaving a deficit of 326,000,000 francs; and the utmost economy contemplated for 1849 only proposed to reduce this deficit by 38,000,000 francs. This was more than double the deficit existing in 1789, when the Revolution began, which was 100,000,000 francs yearly.[2]

[2] Budget, 1848; Moniteur, Jan. 4, 1848; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 354; Hist. of Europe, c. iii. § 69.

40. Divisions on the Address. Feb. 7.

Such was the keenness on both sides, and the ardour which the Liberals evinced in the attack on the Government, that the debate was prolonged for twenty days, and only terminated on 7th February. Several divisions took place, in all of which the Ministry had the majority, though it was by no means so considerable as it had been on former occasions. The amendment on the Address, proposed by the Liberals, was rejected by a majority of 33, the numbers being 222 to 189. Another amend-

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

ment, proposed by M. Desmousseaux de Gevré, was rejected by 228 to 185. The ministerial majority was, on a scrutiny, declared to be 43. These majorities could not be considered as very large, considering that the whole strength of the Government was put forth on the occasion, and that the division was felt on all sides to be a vital one; and in closing the debate M. Guizot announced that, as soon as the entire Conservative party concurred in demanding reform, he would concede it, but that assuredly that day had not yet arrived. The Liberals, however, felt the division as a decisive defeat, so far as the legislature was concerned, and they determined on abandoning all attempts to move the Chamber, and to agitate out of doors for a revolution. "The war of words," said the *National* on February 9th, "is at an end; that of deeds is now to commence."[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 367, 370; Cassagnac, i. 164, 165; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 91, 94; National, Feb. 9, 1848; Regnault, Gouv. Prov., 34.

41. The Opposition resolve on a banquet.

Determined on vigorous and revolutionary action, the Liberal chiefs resolved on forcing on a banquet for the 12th arrondissement of Paris, which had been originally fixed for the 19th January, and postponed in consequence of an interdiction by the police. This was based on an old law passed on 24th August 1790, which had never been carried into execution excepting during the Empire, but seemed to contain words which justified such an interposition of authority. This interdict was at first acquiesced in; but on the day following the rejection of the amendment on the Address, the Liberal deputies met and determined to persevere in their design, holding the old law referred to as either inapplicable to the banquet proposed, or gone into desuetude. This determination, however, was not taken without very considerable difficulty; only 94 deputies voted for it in the meeting on the subject, though the whole strength of the Opposition was assembled on the occasion.[2] This was a great falling-off from the 189 who had supported the amendment to the Address; and it indicated on what dangerous ground they were adventuring when they announced their resolution

Feb. 14.

[2] Journal des Débats, Feb. 14, 1848; Regnault, iii. 377; Cassagnac, i. 165; Hist. du Gouv. Prov., 34.

openly to brave the authority of Government.* They remitted to a committee, accordingly, to prepare an address to the public, announcing their determination to go on with the proposed banquet, which was fixed for the 22d February, and published in all the Opposition journals on the 14th of that month.†

Having thus resolved openly to defy the Government, the Radicals immediately began to increase the agitation by sounding the alarm in all their journals in the strongest terms. That object was soon gained. Terror spread imme-

* The Radicals had enough to do to keep together their troops, who were not a little shaken. The prodigious agitation of men's minds kept at a distance the timid, and caused the audacious themselves to hesitate.—REGNAULT, *Hist. du Gouv. Prov.*, 34.

† "Une réunion de plus de cent députés appartenant aux diverses fonctions de l'opposition a eu lieu ce matin, pour décider en commun quelle ligne de conduite il convient de suivre après le vote du dernier paragraphe de l'adresse.

"La réunion s'est d'abord occupée de la situation politique que lui fait ce paragraphe. Elle a reconnu que l'adresse qui a été votée, constitue, de la part de la majorité, une violation flagrante, audacieuse des droits de la minorité, et que le Ministère, en entraînant son parti dans un acte aussi exorbitant, a tout à la fois méconnu un des principes les plus sacrés de la constitution, violé dans la personne de leurs représentants l'un des droits les plus essentiels des citoyens, et, par une mesure de salut ministérielle, jeté dans le pays de funestes ferments de division et de désordre. Dans de telles circonstances, il lui a paru que ses devoirs devenaient plus graves, plus impérieux, et qu'au milieu des événements qui agitent l'Europe et qui préoccupent la France il ne lui était pas permis d'abandonner un seul instant la garde et la défense des intérêts nationaux. L'opposition restera à son poste, pour surveiller et combattre constamment la politique contre-révolutionnaire dont les entreprises inquiètent aujourd'hui le pays tout entier.

"Quant au droit de réunion des citoyens, droit que les ministère prétend subordonner à son bon plaisir et confisquer à son profit, l'assemblée unanimement convaincue que ce droit, inhérent à toute constitution libre, est d'ailleurs formellement établi par nos lois, a résolu d'en poursuivre le maintien et la conservation par tous les moyens légaux et constitutionnels. En conséquence, une commission a été nommée pour s'entendre avec les électeurs de Paris et pour régler de concert le concours des députés au banquet qui se prépare à titre de protestation contre les prétentions de l'arbitraire.

"Cette décision a été prise sans préjudice des appels que, sous d'autres formes, les députés de l'opposition se réservent d'adresser au corps électoral et à l'opinion publique. La réunion a pensé enfin que le cabinet, en dénaturant le véritable caractère du discours de la couronne et de l'adresse, pour en faire un acte attentatoire aux droits des députés, mettait l'opposition dans la nécessité d'exprimer, en toute occasion, sa réprobation contre un tel excès de pouvoir. Elle a donc résolu à l'unanimité, qu'aucun de ses membres, même ceux que le sort désignerait pour faire partie de la grande députation, ne participerait à la présentation de l'adresse."—*Journal des Débats*, 14th February 1848.

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

42. Great agitation in Paris on the announcement.

diately, and ere long became universal. All business was suspended. Before two days were over, every one whispered to his neighbour, "They will soon be fighting in the streets." The *Journal des Débats*, which had become the organ of the conservative section of the Opposition, upon this strongly counselled moderation to both parties, and even went so far as to announce that a conciliatory policy would be adopted by Government, and concessions made sufficient to satisfy all reasonable demands of the Opposition. But matters had now gone too far for the counsels of moderation to be heard on either side; and the King, in particular, whose obstinacy, when danger was approaching, had increased as much as his resolution, when it was present, had diminished, was determined against any concession. "Every one," said he, "appears to be for reform; some demand it, others promise it. For my own part, I will never be a party to such weakness. Reform is another word for the advent of the Opposition to power, and that is another word for war; it is the beginning of the end. When the Opposition succeed to power, I shall take my departure."[1]

[1] L'Abdication de Louis Philippe, 24; Regnault, iii. 382.

43. Death of the Princess Adelaide.

Unfortunately, the King, during the most critical period of his life, was deprived of the intrepid counsellor who had, by her resolution and abilities, so often brought him in safety through the most perilous crises of his fate. The Princess Adelaide, his sister, who had long been in a declining state of health, expired at Paris on 21st January 1848. No bereavement could at this moment have been more calamitous to the King. To more than masculine intrepidity and firmness she united the still rarer qualities of strong sagacity and sound sense, with a practical knowledge of men surprising in one born in so elevated a sphere. Probably she owed it to the extraordinary vicissitudes of her own and her brother's career, which had brought her into contact with classes the most distant, changes the most surprising, catastrophes the most terrible.[2] It was

[2] Ann. Hist. xxxi. 327. Moniteur, Jan. 22, 1848.

mainly owing to her moral courage that the vacillation was surmounted which led him so long to hesitate in accepting the proffered crown. Had she lived two months longer, there would probably have been no exhibition of the irresolution which caused him to lose it.

44. Preparations for the banquet. Feb. 21.

Meanwhile the committee to whom it had been remitted to choose a place for the proposed banquet, without having as yet selected a place, fixed upon the 22d February. Shortly after, a place was discovered in a street nearly deserted, in the Champs Elysées, named the *Chemin de Versailles*. This was a large open space enclosed by four walls, over which, as over the Roman amphitheatres, it was proposed to stretch a huge canvass covering, so as to convert it into an apartment capable of holding 6000 persons at table. This space was hired by the committee on the 20th, and on the 21st the preparations for stretching the canvass were commenced. But meanwhile the leaders of the Opposition, seeing matters approaching a crisis, felt anxious to avoid a collision, and gladly lent an ear to a compromise proposed by the Government, which promised the means of bringing matters to a judicial determination, without running the fearful risks of a conflict between the people and the military. The arrangement proposed was, that the company were all to be allowed to assemble without impediment or molestation in the place fixed on for the banquet, but that when there, they were to be invited to disperse by the officers of police, and the president M. Boissel, with M. Odillon Barrot and a few of the other leaders, should be summoned before the law-courts to answer for the alleged breach of the interdict. This proposal, it is true, would render abortive the whole objects for which the banquet had been projected, but such was the sense of responsibility entertained by the leaders of the movement, and the general consciousness of the impending danger if the banquet were either dispersed by force,[1] or permitted to go on without impediment, that it was agreed to by the

1 Regnault, ii. 375, 377, 386, 387; Hist. du Gouv. Prov., 30, 33; Cassagnac, i. 168.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

leaders of the Opposition, and M. Duchâtel on the part of the Government, and it was fondly hoped that the crisis had been surmounted.

45. Programme of the proposed procession. Feb. 21.

This compromise was gladly accepted by the great body of the Liberals, and in particular those who desired a change of ministry, but not of the dynasty on the throne, but it was violently condemned by the ultras on both sides. The King and a part of the courtiers objected to it as an unworthy concession to popular violence, and an acknowledgment that the Government declined a combat. The extreme Radicals, led by M. Marrast and M. Ledru-Rollin, declaimed against it as a disgraceful abandonment of the rights of the people. The compromise, however, was carried through, and a sub-committee drew up a proclamation, in which it was announced that the meeting would take place, but the banquet would not follow, as it had been interdicted by the Government. To render the demonstration, however, without the banquet, as imposing as possible, it was announced that the procession was to take place on the largest possible scale. It was to extend along the boulevards from the Place of the Bastile to the Madeleine; the National Guards were invited to attend in their uniforms, but without their arms; and all the students and scholars at the military schools shared in the invitation. The utmost order and regularity was enjoined upon all persons forming part of the cortège, or witnessing it, and it was thought that a hundred thousand persons would appear in its ranks.[1]

[1] Journal des Débats, Feb. 21, 1848.

46. Difficulties on both sides regarding a procession. Feb. 21.

The Government was seized with the utmost apprehensions when this programme appeared in the Opposition journals. The danger appeared more imminent than ever, now that the banquet was converted into a procession. It was not the after-dinner speeches, but a collision in the streets which was the real object of alarm. M. Guizot declared in a Cabinet council held on the subject, that all authority was lost when Government entered into terms with its enemies. M. Duchâtel urged that the opportunity

should be seized of re-establishing the shaken authority of Government. M. Jacqueminot protested that the troops should be brought forward to stop the procession. On their side the Liberal chiefs were hardly less embarrassed, for it had become apparent that the substitution of a procession for the banquet had only augmented the danger, by bringing it into the public streets, and into the presence of the people, and the party was divided on the subject. Impressed with these ideas, they agreed to publish an explanatory address, in which it should be announced that they had no intention of convoking the National Guard, or usurping the powers of Government. A draft of the proposed note was written out and submitted to M. Duchâtel; but the Government declined to agree to it, and the Chamber met at five in the afternoon, without anything being decided on the subject. Explanations were then made on both sides, but without leading to any amicable result,—M. Duchâtel declaring that no impediment would be thrown in the way of any who chose going to the banquet individually, but that any attempt to form a procession on the public streets would be prevented; and M. Barrot replying that there was no intention of disturbing the public peace, that perfect order would be observed in the procession, and that, if the Government took a step which was virtually declaring Paris in a state of siege, they were provoking the breach of the peace which they professed so much anxiety to avoid. These explanations led to no result, and the Chamber separated without anything being determined or agreed to on the subject. But in the evening it was agreed by a majority of the Liberal deputies that they should not attend the procession.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 393,394; Cassagnac, i. 180, 183; Naissance de la République, 43, 44.

Later still at night, a final meeting of the more decided Liberals took place in the office of the *Réforme*, to determine what should be done in regard to the procession on the following day. Opinions, even in that extreme section of the Liberals, were divided on the subject. M.

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

47. Debate, and decision of the Liberal chiefs against the procession.

Lagrange strongly urged the adoption of decided measures. "Yes!" said he, "let the Democracy hoist its standard, and descend boldly into the field of battle for Progress. Humanity in a mass has its eyes upon you; our standard will rally around us the whole warlike and fraternal cohorts. What more are we waiting for?" Loud applause followed these words, and it seemed as if the entire meeting was about to declare for war, when M. Louis Blanc rose and said: "After the Opposition deputies have agitated the country to its very entrails, they recoil. I feel my blood boil within my bosom at such conduct, and if I listened only to my indignation I would say in presence of such baseness, 'Let us raise our war-cry and advance.' But humanity restrains me. I ask if you are entitled to dispose of the blood of a generous people, without any prospect of advantage to the cause of Democracy? If the Patriots commence the conflict to-morrow, abandoned by the leaders who have hitherto put themselves at the head of the movement, they will infallibly be crushed, and the Democracy will be drowned in blood. That will be the result of to-morrow's struggle. And do not deceive yourselves. The National Guard, which has gone in uniform from banquet to banquet, will to-morrow, in the same uniform, mow down the Patriots with grape-shot alongside of the soldiers. Determine on insurrection if you please; but for my part, if you adopt such a decision, I will retire to my home to cover myself with crape, and mourn over the ruin of Democracy." Ledru-Rollin soon after added: "During the first Revolution, when our fathers had fixed on a field-day, they had prepared for it before. Are we in a similar situation? Have we arms, ammunition, combatants ready? The Government is thoroughly prepared. The army only awaits the signal to crush us. My opinion is, that to run into a conflict in such circumstances, is an act of madness." These opinions were so obviously well-founded, that they at length came to prevail with the majority of the meeting. It was agreed at the eleventh

hour that the proposed procession on the day following should be abandoned, and a formal impeachment of the Ministers before the Chamber of Peers substituted in its room. On the day following, a double set of placards appeared on all the walls of Paris—the first, from the Prefect of Police, interdicting any assembly on the public streets; the second, from the Banquet Committee, recommending the people not to attempt to form any procession.[1] *

1 De la Hodde, Hist. de Sociétés Secrètes, 485, 488; Regnault, iii. 393,395; Cassagnac, i. 184, 186.

48. Articles in the National and Réforme on the subject.

Shortly before, an article had appeared in the *National* from the pen of M. Marrast, which pointed to the proposed demonstration as a great moral movement, which was to crush the Government by the simple demonstration of public opinion, without any physical collision. "Do not," said he, addressing the Minister, "reckon on a disturbance. If you wish it, rely upon it you shall not have it. What we are more anxious for is a demonstration of which the calmness may terrify you, while its mag-

* "En ajournant ainsi l'exercice d'un droit, l'opposition prend l'engagement de faire prévaloir ce droit par toutes les voix constitutionnelles. Elle ne manquera pas à ce devoir; elle poursuivra, avec plus de persévérance et plus d'énergie que jamais, la lutte qu'elle a entreprise contre une politique corruptrice, violente et antinationale. En ne se rendant pas au banquet, l'opposition accomplit un grand acte de modération et d'humanité; elle fait qu'il lui reste à accomplir un grand acte de fermeté et de justice."—*National*, 22d February 1848.

The indictment against the Government promised in the last paragraph, was at the same time drawn up and signed.

"1. D'avoir trahi au dehors l'honneur et les intérêts de la France.

"2. D'avoir faussé les principes de la constitution, la garantie de la liberté, et attenté aux droits des citoyens.

"3. D'avoir, par une corruption systématique, tenté de substituer à l'expression de l'opinion publique les calculs d'intérêt, privé, et de pervertir ainsi le gouvernement représentatif.

"4. D'avoir trafiqué, dans un intérêt ministeriel, des fonctions publiques ainsi que de tous les attributs et priviléges du pouvoir.

"5. D'avoir, dans le même but, ruiné les finances de l'état et compromis ainsi les forces et la grandeur nationale.

"6. D'avoir violemment dépouillé les citoyens d'un droit essentiel à toute constitution libre et dont l'exercice leur avait été garanti par la charte, par les lois, et par les précédents.

"7. D'avoir enfin, par une politique ouvertement contre-révolutionnaire, remis en question toutes les conquêtes de nos deux révolutions et jeté le pays dans une agitation profonde."—*Réforme*, 22d February 1848; REGNAULT, iii. 395, 397.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

nitude may indicate the firm determination of the people. We wish that the deputies, the electors, the officers and soldiers of the National Guard, with all the citizens who have a resolute spirit, should meet you in a pacific mass, unarmed, immense, and whose all-powerful voice may indicate the respect in which they hold you. It is order which constitutes our strength—it is the voice of opinion which will pass over your battalions to crush you. The movement will be the more terrible for you from its very tranquillity. You shall have neither troubles nor disorders, nor a bloody collision. The people of Paris have no need of a battle to conquer—it is enough for them to show themselves."[1] And now, when they were, as they conceived, discreditably abandoned by the leaders of the "dynastic Opposition," they again addressed the people in the *Réforme*, dissuading them from any collision with the military, and promising them ulterior measures at a future time. "Men of the people," said M. Flocon in that journal, "beware of any rash excess to-morrow. Do not furnish the Government with the opportunity so much desired of a bloody success. Do not give the dynastic Opposition, which abandons at once you and itself, a pretext of which it would willingly avail itself, to throw a veil over its weakness. You now see what are the consequences of allowing the initiative to be taken by those who are not our own. Patience yet a while! *When it shall seem good to the democratic party to take the lead in its turn, it will be seen whether it will retire when it has once advanced.*"[2]

[1] National, Feb. 21, 1848.

[2] National, Feb. 22, 1848.

49. Strength of the Republicans at this period.

A very curious and valuable account exists, from the pen of one who was initiated into all their secrets, of the strength of the secret societies in France at this period, which embraced all who were decided Republicans. "The Republican party," says Lucien de la Hodde, "was, in February 1848, composed of the following persons:—4000 subscribers to the *National*, of whom only one-half were Republicans, the other belonging to the dynastic

Opposition, led by Garnier Pagès and Carnot. Of these 2000 there were not more than 600 in Paris, and of these only 200 could be relied on in an actual conflict. The *Réforme* had 2000 subscribers, of whom 500 were in Paris, and they would turn out to a man. The two societies, '*des Saisons*' and '*la Société Dissidente*,' promised 1000 combatants, though it was doubtful if they could muster 600, though the latter embraced all the Communists in Paris. To these we must add 400 or 500 old conspirators, whom the first musket-shot would recall to their old standards; and 1500 Polish, Italian, and Spanish refugees, who would probably do the same, from the idea that it would advance the cause of revolution in their own countries. In all, 4000 in Paris, and that was the very utmost that could be relied on in the capital. In the provinces there was only one real secret society, which was at Lyons: Marseilles, Toulouse, and two or three other great towns, professed to have such, but no reliance could be placed on them. On the whole, there might be 15,000 or 16,000 Republicans in the departments, and 4000 in Paris. In all, 19,000 or 20,000 out of 17,000,000 of male inhabitants—a proportion so infinitely small, that it is evident they could never have overturned a strong government."[1]

[1] De la Hodde, Hist. des Sociétés Secrètes, 402, 403.

50. Forces of the Government, and its measures. Feb. 21.

On the other hand, the forces of the Government were much more considerable, and such as, if properly directed and supported by the National Guard, must have secured them an easy victory in any contest which might be approaching. The regular troops in Paris were 25,000 strong; and they might in six hours be doubled by the troops in the neighbouring towns. Versailles had a strong reserve of cavalry, Vincennes of artillery. In a Cabinet council held on the afternoon of the 20th, when it was first known that the Banquet Committee had resolved to go on with the procession, it was determined to prevent it by force; and orders were given to have the whole military posts of the capital strongly occupied at seven

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

in the following morning. Had this resolution been adhered to, the demonstration might have been prevented, and the family of Orléans at this moment seated on the throne of France. But, unfortunately, in the course of the evening intelligence arrived of the Opposition deputies having declined to take part in the procession, and published an address, dissuading others from doing so, which appeared in the evening papers of the 21st at four P.M. This was immediately communicated to the Government, and they, deeming the crisis over, thought it advisable to do nothing which might provoke a fresh collision, and accordingly determined to countermand the troops. Orders to this effect were despatched in all directions from the Tuileries at eleven at night on the 21st; and, accordingly, on the morning of the 22d not a soldier was to be seen in the streets.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 197, 200; Regnault, iii. 397, 399; Moniteur, Feb. 22, 1848.

51. Aspect of the people. Feb. 22.

The consequences of this unfortunate step were soon apparent. The people, who were for the most part ignorant of the resolution come to at the eleventh hour by the Liberal committees to countermand the procession, and of the counter-orders in consequence given to the troops, assembled in great numbers in the principal streets at daybreak on the 22d, and seeing no attempts made to interrupt them, deemed it certain that the demonstration was to go on, and that the cause of reform had triumphed. They were not shaken in this belief by the addresses already given, which appeared in the morning newspapers of the same day, inviting the people not to attempt a demonstration. They still remained calm and motionless, in great crowds, in the Boulevard de la Madeleine, the Place de la Concorde, and the Champs Elysées, awaiting the course of events, and convinced that, before nightfall, something decisive would take place. The emissaries from the *Réforme* and the *National* gave this advice, which was implicitly obeyed. Meanwhile, the name of M. Guizot was in every mouth, and generally with the same execrations as that of M. de Polignac had been in

July 1830. As the afternoon approached, some bands of students began to traverse the streets, singing the Marseillaise, and shouting, "Vive la Réforme!—à bas M. Guizot!" Still, however, there was no actual rioting till late in the evening, when, in consequence of the crowds which still thronged the streets, some bodies of cavalry were stationed in the Rue de Rivoli, St Honoré, and the boulevards. They were pelted with stones in some places by the mob, and in the centre of the city some attempts were made to erect barricades. In consequence of this circumstance, it was resolved to occupy Paris in a military manner on the following morning, and according to constant usage since 1830, by *joint detachments of the regular troops and the National Guard.* Orders to assemble the latter force were accordingly sent out late at night on the 22d, and at seven in the morning of the 23d the *générale* beat in all the streets of Paris, and the National Guard, in uniform, were everywhere to be seen hastening to their rallying-points. To this resolution the fall of the monarchy is beyond all question to be ascribed.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 201, 203; Regnault, iii. 401, 403; Moniteur, Feb. 23, 1848.

52. Insidious policy of the National Guard.

The principal officers of the great civic force in Paris, which for ten years had been worked upon by the Liberal press, and which had become extremely discontented in consequence of its will not having in all cases been implicity obeyed by the Government, had a meeting at nine at night, on the 22d, in the office of the *Siècle*, to deliberate on the course which they should pursue in the crisis which was approaching. It was there resolved unanimously that they should take up arms and appear in their battalions with or without the orders of Government on the following day. They were to assume such an attitude as should convince every one that, however determined to displace the Ministry, they would not permit the overthrow of the Government. In a word, they were to interpose between the contending parties in such a way as should at once prevent the effusion of blood,

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

force reform upon the Government, and hinder the throne being shaken. For this purpose they were to place themselves everywhere between the soldiers and multitude, and compel both to desist from conflict, while at the same time their voice and attitude should force a change of men and measures on the Executive. This plan of operations was openly expounded in a petition drawn up by the officers of the 4th Legion, and to which nearly all the others gave in their adhesion. Thus the National Guard of Paris assumed the functions of the Legislature, and aspired, like the Prætorians of Rome, not merely to give, as they had done, a monarch to the throne, but to impose a policy on his Government. Meanwhile their commander, General Jacqueminot, was so ignorant of its real disposition, that he assured the Council that, with the exception of a few battalions which were ill-disposed and known, the loyalty of the whole civic force might with confidence be relied on.[1]

[1] Recit. de St Amand, Cap. à la 4ème Legion; Le Drame aux Tuileries, 4; Cassagnac, i. 204; Regnault, Hist. du Gouv. Prov., c. 3.

53. The National Guard in effect join the insurgents.

It soon appeared how far the anticipations of General Jacqueminot were correct, and what support, in its last agony, the monarchy of July was to receive from the National Guard. The 23d February opened upon a city agitated but undecided, ready to obey the strongest impulse, to surrender the direction to whoever had the courage to seize it. The presence of the military in all the principal quarters sufficiently revealed the apprehensions of Government—the conduct of the civic force too clearly evinced to which side it would incline. At ten, M. Flocon, a determined Revolutionist, entered in haste the office of the *Réforme*, and exclaimed, "Quick, all clothe yourselves in the uniform of the National Guard: never mind whether they are your own or not: intimate to all Patriots to do the same. As soon as you are dressed, hasten to the mayor's, calling out 'Vive la Réforme!' Directly you are there, put yourselves at the head of the detachments as they arrive, *and interpose them between the soldiers and the people.* Quick, quick! the Republic is to be had for the taking."[2] These directions, emanating from the

[2] De la Hodde, Soc. Sec., 442.

headquarters of the movement, were too faithfully adopted; and the National Guard, timid, desirous to avoid a collision, and avert the shedding of blood, were everywhere too happy to follow them. The orders of Government being that all the posts should be occupied by the troops of the line and the civic forces jointly, the latter were everywhere on the spot with the soldiers, and, in conformity with their injunction, they constantly interposed between the military and the populace, so as to render any attempt to disperse the assemblages impossible, as no officer would incur the responsibility of openly engaging in a conflict with the National Guard of the capital.* Several of the legions openly joined them, at least in words, and traversed the streets, crying out "Vive la Réforme!" The military, condemned to inactivity by this skilful policy, remained passive spectators of the increasing tumult; and the fact of their nowhere acting, spread abroad the belief that they too had become traitors, and that the whole military force of the capital was on the side of the Liberals. The revolutionary leaders were not slow in taking advantage of this auspicious state of things. Orders were immediately sent to the secret societies everywhere to come forth, and bring with them the strength of the faubourgs. The agitation rose to its highest point when these formidable bands, which recalled the worst days of the first Revolution, began to appear at noon in the Rue St Honoré; and in the centre of the city barricades were hastily run up, and the gunsmiths' shops began to be pillaged.[1]

Great was the consternation at the Tuileries when

[1] De la Hodde, Soc. Sec., 444, 445; Cassagnac, i. 206, 207, 208; Regnault, iii. 402, 403; Hist. du Gouv. Prov., c 3.

*. "La Garde Nationale, appelée en effet le matin du 24 pour *s'interposer entre le peuple et la troupe de ligne*, répondait lentement et mollement à l'appel. Elle voyait dans le mouvement prolongé du peuple une manifestation antiministérielle, une *pétition armée* en faveur de la réforme électorale qu'elle était loin de désapprouver. Elle y souriait en secret. Elle ne s'alarmait pas trop de voir ce peuple *voter à coup de fusil* contre le système usé du Roi. Ce Prince avait vieilli dans le cœur de la Garde Nationale, comme le chiffre de ses années. La sagesse paraissait aux Parisiens pétrifiée en obstination."—LAMARTINE, *Histoire de la Révolution de* 1848, i. 71, 72.

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

54. Consternation in the Tulieries.

intelligence of these events arrived, and successive messengers brought in the news that the detachments of the National Guard were shouting "Vive la Réforme!" as they traversed the streets; that they were everywhere interposing between the military and the mob, and in some cases had actually formed line with fixed bayonets against the cavalry who had orders to clear the streets. To every one who came in, the King put the question, "Is it possible that the National Guard is taking part with the Reformers—that it is following in the wake of the *National* and the *Réforme?*" From all he received the same answer, or the consternation painted on their visages told it too plainly. The imminence of the danger was at once perceived. By thrusting themselves in this dubious manner between the regulars and the mob, the civic force was serving the cause of revolution far more effectually than if they had openly joined it; for, had they done so, the united strength of the National Guards and insurgents would have been quickly defeated by the regular soldiers, who were all steady; but now the insurgents were every hour gathering strength, from the passive attitude of the troops in presence of rapidly-increasing danger. The scales fell from all eyes; the fatal truth had become apparent; the Citizen King, the creation of the National Guard, was about to be destroyed by the power which had erected his throne. Yet how was the danger to be averted—how was the demon of their own creation to be exorcised ? [1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 209, 210; Regnault, iii. 106, 107; De la Hodde, 445, 447; Hist. du Gouv. Prov., c. iii.

55. Resignation of M. Guizot.

In this extremity a council was hastily summoned in the King's cabinet, in the Tuileries, which the Queen was invited to attend. M. Guizot was, from a feeling of delicacy, absent. The first words she uttered were: "If M. Guizot has the slightest feeling of devotion to the King and to France, he will not remain an hour longer in power —he is ruining the King." "Madame," replied M. Duchâtel, "M. Guizot is determined, like all his colleagues, to defend to the last extremity, if necessary, the King and

the monarchy, but he has no intention, any more than ourselves, of forcing himself on the Crown." "Do not say such things," interrupted the King; "if M. Guizot knew—" "I desire nothing more than that he should know," resumed the Queen: "I would say it to himself. I esteem him sufficiently for that; he is a man of honour, and will understand me." Upon this, M. Duchâtel broke up the conference by going to bring in M. Guizot; and in his absence the Duke de Montpensier strongly supported the opinion of the Queen, and insisted on a message being immediately sent to the Chambers, announcing the concession of Parliamentary Reform; to which M. Duchâtel said, as a man of honour, he could not accede. When M. Duchâtel returned with M. Guizot, the King, who was still in his cabinet, with the Queen and the princes, without pretending to be insensible to the dangers of his situation, expressed the greatest repugnance at the idea of separating from his Minister. "I would rather abdicate," said he. "You cannot do that, my friend," said the Queen; "you belong to France, not to yourself." "True," replied the King, with a mournful accent, "I am more to be pitied than my Ministers—I cannot resign." Then turning to M. Guizot, he said, "Do you believe, my dear President, that the Cabinet is in a situation to make head against the storm, and to triumph over it?" "Sire!" replied M. Guizot, "when the King proposes such a question, he himself answers it. The Cabinet may be in a condition to gain the victory in the streets, but it cannot conquer at the same time the royal family and the Crown. To throw a doubt on its support in the Tuileries is to destroy it in the exercise of power. The Cabinet has no alternative but to retire." The King then consulted his Ministers for a few minutes as to who should be sent for to construct a new Ministry, and Count Molé was mentioned. The King then, shedding tears, embraced his Ministers, who were not less affected.[1] "You will always remain the friends of the King," said the Queen: "you will support

[1] Cassagnac, i. 209, 212; Regnault, iii. 404; Lamartine, Histoire de la Révolution de 1848, i. 85, 86.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

him." "How happy you are," said the King, as they took their leave—"you depart with honour, I remain with shame."

56. Announcement of this to the Chambers, and its reception in Paris.

No sooner was the retirement of M. Guizot determined on, than he himself announced the intelligence with much dignity to the Chamber. The Opposition immediately broke forth into the most indecent acclamations; and the news, instantly communicated to the streets, spread almost with the rapidity of the electric telegraph over all Paris. Opinions were much divided on the subject. The National Guard and "dynastic Opposition" were in transports; theirs was the triumph; they had interposed between the Crown and revolution, and saved the monarchy. The Conservatives were in dismay: again, as in 1789, the Crown was receding before the populace, shrinking from an encounter; already it was whispered in the streets, "The King is betraying us." But the effect upon the extreme Liberals was still more serious. In an instant, like a demon suddenly unchained, the spirit of revolution stalked abroad. "All," says the annalist, "who were in debt, all who had anything to gain by disturbance—the galley-slaves, the robbers, the burglars, the assassins—combined in one hideous *mêlée*. Some hoped for rapine and blood, others for disorder and confusion,—all for selfish benefit from convulsion." At meetings hastily called at the offices of the *Réforme* and the *National*, opinions were much divided as to the course which they should pursue. MM. Marrast and Flocon strongly counselled immediate insurrection; MM. Etienne Arago and Louis Blanc knew not what to advise, but recommended awaiting the course of events. To the latter opinion M. Ledru-Rollin adhered, deeming it too hazardous as yet openly to attack the monarchy.[1] Meanwhile the National Guard, regarding the victory as gained, and themselves the heroes who had won it, returned joyfully chanting songs of triumph to their homes, and gave vent

[1] Cassagnac, i. 212, 214; De la Hodde, Soc. Sec., 450, 453; Regnault, iii. 404, 405; Lamartine, Hist. de la Révolution, i. 86, 88.

to the general enthusiasm with which they were seized by the spontaneous illumination of their windows.

But the expectations on both sides were destined to disappointment; and the night which began amidst the blaze of illumination was the last of anything like freedom—the last of the monarchy in France. While the National Guards, who had virtually betrayed their oaths, were rejoicing in the success of their defection, bands of ardent, decided revolutionists were forming in the central parts of the city, prepared to turn to the best account the unlooked-for prospects of success which it had opened to them. One of these bands was formed at the door of the office of the *Réforme*, and headed by the most determined of its contributors; a second came from the door of the *National*, which marched towards the Boulevard Italien, shouting "Vive la Réforme!—à bas les Ministres!". A third, more squalid in appearance, more ragged in dress, more ferocious in expression, came up from the Boulevard de la Bastile. At its head was a savage-looking man named Lagrange, whose pale visage, restless eye, and quivering lip, revealed a desperate intent. These three columns united in front of the Café Tortoni, on the Boulevard Italien, and a vast crowd of idlers, expecting something, soon assembled around it. Soon their expectations were realised. A small detachment, armed with sabres and pikes, broke off from the main body on the boulevards, and moved towards the Hotel of Foreign Affairs, occupied by M. Guizot, in front of which a battalion of infantry was stationed, in consequence of its having been attacked the preceding evening. A red flag waved over the forest of pikes which the crowd bore along, and shone bright in the glare of the torches by which it was surrounded. The crowd halted at the line of bayonets which barred the street, and the horse of the commander reared and fell backward into the line, which closed and surrounded its chief.[1] At this

57. Catastrophe in front of M. Guizot's house.

[1] Lamartine, Hist. de la Révolution, i. 94, 97; De la Hodde, 456, 457; Castagnac, i. 218, 219; Regnault, iii. 404, 405.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

moment, when the battalion was standing with their loaded pieces in their hands, a shot was discharged by Lagrange towards the soldiers; and they, deeming themselves attacked, replied by a volley which at once brought down fifty of the mob, killed or wounded. Never did great effects more closely follow a comparatively inconsiderable event; in (the) excited state of men's minds, Lagrange's stray shot brought down the monarchy.

58. Parade of the dead bodies through Paris.

The premeditation and design with which this calamitous collision between the mob and regular troops had been provoked was immediately seen from what ensued. Hardly had the unhappy persons who were killed or wounded fallen than as many of them as it could contain were placed in a large waggon, apparently brought up with the crowd for the occasion. On it they were skilfully arranged with artistic talent for theatrical effect, the bloody wounds being carefully exposed to the view, and the whole surmounted by a female figure, half naked, who unfortunately had fallen in the affray. When the hideous mass was thoroughly arranged, the cry was raised, "To the *National!*" and thither they went, surrounded by a crowd, every instant increasing, in the highest state of excitement. After waiting a few minutes at this centre of the insurrection, they moved off, and, crossing the Quartier of Montmartre, again halted at the doors of the *Réforme*, where they arrived at midnight. There the crowd was harangued by the leaders, who represented them as the bodies of those who had fallen under the stroke of a cruel and vindictive tyranny. No one suspected, what was the truth, that the conflict had been got up, without a thought of its victims, to add to the excitement and fury of the people.[1] From the office of the *Réforme* the procession continued its course all night by torchlight through Paris, surrounded by a dense crowd, in a frantic state of excitement, shouting and

[1] Cassagnac, i. 218, 219; Lamartine, i. 95, 98; Regnault, iii. 405, 406; De la Hodde, 456, 457.

howling aloud, and spreading consternation and the thirst for vengeance wherever they went.*

1848. 59.

During this eventful night, big with the fate of France and of Europe, the greatest embarrassment prevailed at the Tuileries. In pursuance of the advice of M. Guizot and M. Duchâtel, M. Molé had been sent for on the preceding day, and had had a conference with the King, but nothing definitive had been agreed upon; and towards evening the increasing agitation evinced too clearly that the time for half-measures had gone past, and that no alternative remained but strenuous resistance or unlimited concession. When intelligence arrived of the melancholy catastrophe in front of the Foreign Office, and the only question was a battle in the street or democratic government, the King, by advice of M. Guizot, who still, though out of office, remained in the Tuileries, sent for M. Thiers, who received the royal summons at midnight, and immediately repaired to the palace. At the same time the command of the entire military, regular and National Guard, was withdrawn from Generals Sébastiani and Jacqueminot, and bestowed on Marshal Bugeaud, whose high character and deserved popularity with the soldiers, as well as his long career of victory, pointed him out as the most appropriate person to surmount such a crisis. M. Thiers, on his arrival, asked to see the military plans of Marshal Bugeaud, of which, upon examination, he approved; but he declared at the same time that he could not, in the circumstances, form a

M. Thiers is sent for. Feb. 24.

* It is a curious proof of the difference of national character, and of the different temper of the public mind in Great Britain and France at this period, that a few days after this frightful theatrical exhibition had been got up with such effect in Paris—viz. on March 6, 1848—on occasion of the Radical riots in Glasgow, stimulated by the success of the French movement, a similar attempt, apparently suggested by the first, was made to enhance the excitement, by parading the body of one of the unfortunate persons who had been slain by the military, through the crowded streets. But in Scotland the effect was just the reverse of what it had been in France, and it contributed more than anything else to quell the insurrection, for it showed that the military would do their duty, and what the consequences of resisting them might be.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

cabinet without the assistance of M. Odillon Barrot. The King manifested the greatest repugnance to this proposal; it was the announcement, not of a change of men, but of measures. To admit M. Odillon Barrot into the Cabinet was to abandon the whole policy of his reign, capitulate to the reformers, and accept democracy as the ruling power in the State. But the urgency of the circumstances would admit of no compromise; and at length the repugnance of the monarch was overcome, and M. Odillon Barrot was sent for and intrusted with the arduous duties of Minister of the Interior. The long-wished-for and entire change of Ministry was immediately announced by placards over all the streets of Paris, with the appointment of General Lamoricière to the command of the National Guard.[1]

[1] Lamartine, i. 100, 108; Cassagnac, i. 223, 225; Regnault, iii. 408, 409.

60. Excessive agitation in Paris during the night.

Meanwhile the agitation in Paris had everywhere become excessive, and in the crowded parts of the city reached a height which threatened an immediate convulsion. The insurgents, now relieved of all resistance by the dispersion of the National Guard and the paralysis of Government, got possession of the principal churches; and the dismal clang of the tocsin, which was rung all night, recalled to the few who yet survived, the terrible night which preceded the 10th of August 1792. Roused by the mournful and ceaseless sound, the inhabitants of Paris were all astir before daylight; few eyes were closed during the whole night. Under cloud of darkness, barricades were hastily run up in the central parts of the city, waggons and omnibuses overturned, pavement torn up, and every preparation made for a desperate defence. Already the gunsmiths' shops were broken open, and armed defenders were to be seen on the summit of the defences. At the same time, the few remaining leaders of the constitutional Opposition, M. Duvergier de Hauranne, M. Remusat, Marshal Gérard, and General Lamoricière, hastened to the Tuileries to offer, in its last extremity, to the Government of the monarchy, the aid of their counsels or the support of their arms.[2]

[2] Lamartine, i. 109, 110, 140; Cassagnac, i. 223, 225; Regnault, iii. 409; De la Hodde, 455.

Marshal Bugeaud's success.

But how urgent soever affairs may have appeared, or really have been, during the night, Marshal Bugeaud's vigour and capacity were equal to the crisis. No sooner did the veteran soldier receive his appointment as commander-in-chief than he hastened, at two in the morning, to the King, received his last instructions from him in person, and went forth with them to the military headquarters in the city. He found everything in confusion, very few officers or aides-de-camp in attendance, and no one knowing who was to command and who obey. His vigour and capacity, however, soon gave a new direction to affairs; never was seen more clearly what a master-mind is, and what vigour and capacity can do in a crisis. Instantly, as if by enchantment, everything was changed; order succeeded to chaos, consecutive movement to vacillating direction. Orders were despatched in every direction, the bearers of which, in the obscurity of the night, were unobserved, and all reached their destination. By five in the morning the whole columns were in motion, and rapidly advancing to the important strategic points assigned to them in the city. They were four in number, and all commanded by officers of vigour and experience. The first was to advance to the Hôtel de Ville along the quay of the city, the same direction which the columns took which, on the 9th Thermidor, overthrew Robespierre; the second, which was commanded by General Bedeau, was to move by the boulevards to the Place of the Bastile; the third, to penetrate through the heart of Paris between the two others, so as to be able to aid either, if required; the fourth was to march to the Pantheon, and occupy it in force. The orders of the whole were to advance rapidly forward and destroy all barricades on their passage, and await further orders when they had reached the point to which they were ordered to advance. Such was the vigour employed in the movements, that by seven the whole columns had reached their points of destination except the second, which was a little

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

behind, owing to General Bedeau having engaged in a conference with the commander of a body of national guards which opposed his progress. The Hôtel de Ville, Pantheon, and whole centre of the city, were strongly occupied, without the troops left at the Tuileries and Palais Royal being weakened. Twenty-five thousand men, who had advanced in the four columns, had done the whole, and done it by the mere force of an advance, without firing a shot. The barricades had all been surmounted and levelled, the important posts occupied, Paris was militarily won, the victory gained, the horrors of revolution averted. At this moment Marshal Bugeaud received an order, signed by M. Thiers and Odillon Barrot, *to cease the combat and withdraw the troops!* He refused at first to obey it unless accompanied by an order under the sign-manual of the King; but soon one signed by the Duke de Nemours compelled submission.[1]

[1] Lamartine, i. 106, 108; Regnault, iii. 409, 410; Cassagnac, i. 222, 224.

62. M. Thiers and Odillon Barrot succumb, and withdraw the troops.

The secret of this extraordinary and most calamitous change, when decisive success had already been obtained over the insurgents, was that M. Thiers and Odillon Barrot, who, with Duvergier de Hauranne, formed the new Ministry, thinking that the time for resistance was past, and that nothing but conciliation and concession could either avert the dangers from the monarchy or consolidate their newly-acquired power, had come to a resolution not only to terminate the conflict by submission, but to withdraw the troops from all the positions they had won in the city. A proclamation to this effect was at six in the morning drawn up and signed, and immediately placarded over all Paris.* It was received with shouts of triumph by the revolutionists, with profound indignation by the troops, with dismay by the dynastic Opposition and

* "Citoyens de Paris!—L'ordre est donné de suspendre le feu. Nous venons d'être chargés par le Roi de proposer un Ministère. La Chambre va être dissoute. Le Général Lamoricière est nommé Commandant-en-chef de la Garde Nationale de Paris. MM. Odillon Barrot, Thiers, Lamoricière, et Duvergier de Hauranne, sont ministres. Le but—Ordre, Union, Réforme.—ODILLON BARROT, THIERS."—*Moniteur*, 25th February 1848.

National Guard. All saw that the victory was renounced at the moment when it had been gained—that the Ministers in the moment of triumph had capitulated for the monarchy. Such was the indignation of the soldiers, as they marched back through the barricades which they had just won at the bayonet's point, that many of the officers broke their swords and left them on the pavement, and numbers of the soldiers threw away their muskets. Then was seen the peril of that intermixture, on a crisis, of civil and military authority, and the wisdom of the Romans, who in war vested the supreme civil as well as military authority in the consuls, and in times of great danger vested supreme power of every kind in the hands of a dictator taken from the military ranks. Had Marshal Bugeaud been appointed dictator on the night of the 23d February 1848, instead of being subordinate to M. Thiers, beyond all doubt the Orléans family would at this moment have been seated on the throne of France.[1]

[1] Regnault, iii. 410,411; Cassagnac, i. 246, 248; Moniteur, Feb. 26, 1848; Lamartine. i. 108, 109.

63. Ruinous consequences of this concession.

The consequences of this capitulation to a body of insurgents and a dubious oscillating National Guard, proved exactly what might have been anticipated by any one in the least acquainted with the march of events in a revolution. The insurgents, still few in number, instead of being pacified, were only the more excited by the concession which had been made; the vacillating and selfish in crowds joined their ranks, from the belief they were likely to prove victorious; the brave and loyal retired in despair from a conflict which its leaders had already abandoned. Surrounded by crowds which incessantly shouted in the triumph of victory, the soldiers, in the deepest dejection, slowly wended their way back to the vicinity of the Tuileries and the Palais Royal, where they were massed in still formidable bodies around the last asylum of Government and order. But, broken in spirit and paralysed in strength by the orders of Government, they were incapable of opposing any effective barrier against the torrent of revolution which now rolled impetuously for-

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

ward from all quarters, and surged violently against the motionless barrier of steel which still environed the royal dwelling. From a window in the Tuileries, M. Guizot, in vain impotence, beheld the fall of the monarchy; he saw it in bitterness, but not regret. "Strong minds," says M. de Lamartine, "may be broken, but they never repent."[1]

[1] Lamartine, i. 108, 110; Cassagnac, i. 227, 229; Regnault, iii. 410, 411.

64. Abandonment of the Palais Royal.

It was a small consolation to find, amidst this universal crash, that the authors of it in no degree profited by the ruin they had occasioned. The proclamation announcing the withdrawal of the troops from the combat was placarded at eight in the morning; and the excitement consequent upon it, and the retreat of the military, was such, that by ten M. Thiers felt he could no longer direct the Government; and he was obliged to entreat the King to substitute M. Odillon Barrot in his room, which was accordingly done. But it was of very little importance who was made Prime Minister; the march of events, in consequence of the concession which had been made, was so rapid that all administrations, and soon the monarchy itself, were swept before it. The troops, paralysed by the order not to fire, and already foreseeing the change of government which was approaching, knew not what to do, and could oppose no resistance to the armed multitude which surrounded them. After a slight struggle they abandoned the Palais, and retired across the inner court to the military post of the Château d'Eau, already filled with wounded Municipal Guards, who had with mournful resolution resisted in it to the last. The mob, seeing the Palais Royal deserted, broke in, and speedily spread themselves over every part of the august edifice. In the twinkling of an eye it was all filled by a hideous multitude, and sacked and plundered from top to bottom.[2] Its beautiful pictures, splendid statues, and gorgeous furniture, were pierced with bayonets, thrown down, or cast into the flames; in less than half an hour the magnificent apartments presented nothing but a mass of

[2] Lamartine, i. 111, 112; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 172; Regnault, iii. 411; Cassagnac, i. 227, 229.

broken and destroyed splendour. Markworthy circumstance! The Palais Royal, the cradle of the Revolution, where Camille Desmoulins had sixty years before cut down the green boughs in the interior garden, and distributed them to the insurgents,[1]—where, eighteen years before, a fresh revolt was organised, and a new dynasty placed on the throne—was the first victim of the passions it had called forth, and the treason it had organised. The judgments of God were coming upon the earth.

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. vi. § 96.

65. Last hours of the monarchy.

The King took breakfast—his last meal in the palace of his ancestors—on that morning, surrounded by his family and yet remaining officers, in the gallery of Diana in the Tuileries. After breakfast they retired into the royal cabinet—the room of deliberation successively of Louis XVI., Napoleon, Louis XVIII., and Charles X. The Queen, the Duchesses of Orléans and Montpensier, Marshals Soult and Gérard, M. Thiers, M. de Remusat, M. Cousin, M. Duvergier de Hauranne, were around him. General Lamoricière was in the court of the Carrousel, haranguing the mob; they heard him respectfully, but continued advancing, while the loud shouts upon the capture of the Palais Royal, and the appearance of articles of plunder in the hands of the victorious insurgents issuing from its walls, both stimulated the passions of the aggressors, and told the trembling inmates of the palace what fate awaited them. The royal circle and cabinet were in that state of anxious uncertainty which is of all others the least calculated to resist revolutionary aggression, when MM. Remusat and Duvergier de Hauranne, who had just gone out, re-entered, and asked to speak to the princes in private. The princes rose from table, where they were at breakfast, and went with them to one of the windows. The anxiety of the King and Queen led them to join the group. "Sire," said M. de Remusat, "it is necessary that the King should know the truth; to conceal it at this moment would be to render ourselves implicated in all that may follow. Your feeling of security

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

proves that you are deceived. Three hundred feet from this, the dragoons are exchanging their sabres and the soldiers their muskets with the people."—"It is impossible!" cried the King, stepping back with astonishment. "Sire," said M. de l'Aubospère, an officer in attendance, "I have seen it." Upon this all the company rose from table, and the King went up-stairs, and soon came down with the Duke de Nemours and the Duke de Montpensier, dressed in uniform. "Go," said the Queen, who had the feelings of Maria-Theresa and Marie-Antoinette in her heart, "show yourself to the discouraged troops, to the wavering National Guard: I will come out on the balcony with my grandchildren and the princesses, and I will see you die in a way worthy of yourself, your throne, and your misfortunes." The King descended the stairs, still hoping to arrest the movement, while the Queen and princesses went to the balcony. It was of sinister augury; Marie-Antoinette had stood there on 10th August 1792.[1]

[1] Lamartine, i. 118, 121; Regnault, iii. 410,411; Cassagnac, i. 229.

66. The King is forced to abdicate.

The reception of the King by the troops and the National Guard, on the Place of the Carrousel, as seen from a distance, was sufficiently encouraging. The Queen and princesses saw the waving of sabres in the air in the distance as the King passed along the lines, and heard the distant sound of cries, without being able to distinguish the words used. They thought that the reception had been enthusiastic, that the approach of the crisis had restored the loyalty of the troops, and they re-entered into the palace with joy in their hearts. But it was of short duration. The King returned from the inspection with despair engraven on his mind. He had seen the National Guard, heard the cry of "Vive la Réforme!—à bas les Ministres!" issue from their ranks, and witnessed the impassible motionless attitude of the troops of the line, utterly alienated by the inactivity to which they had been doomed, and the inactivity forced upon them. He re-entered the royal apartments with a pale visage, on which consternation and despair were as clearly painted

as they had been on that of Louis XVI. when he came into the same room, after a similar review, on the morning of the 10th August 1792.[1] The whole persons in the apartment were now thrown into the utmost alarm; the agitation of the princesses was so great that they wept aloud; and such was the mournful character of the scene, that the eyes of the soldiers and National Guard on duty in the apartment were filled with tears, and they entreated the officers that they might be removed from the spectacle of the last agony of kings. At this terrible moment, while dropping shots on the Place Carrousel told that the final struggle was approaching, M. Emile de Girardin, formerly a deputy, now editor of the *Presse* newspaper, a decided Republican, and of an ardent character, entered the apartment, and having approached the King, told him, in a few short and decided sentences, that ministerial changes were now inadequate to tranquillise the public mind, and that "nothing short of ABDICATION would suffice." The King, who was at that moment writing out a list of new ministers, still more Radical than Odillon Barrot and Duvergier de Hauranne, let the pen fall from his hand when he heard the fatal word, and earnestly inquired of Emile de Girardin whether there was no other alternative. "Sire!" replied he, "the abdication of the King, or the abdication of the monarchy—that is all that remains; there is not a minute to choose an intermediate path." The monarch still hesitated before taking the decisive step, when the Duke de Montpensier interposed, and urged instant abdication with a rudeness both of words and gesture which, even at a moment of such extreme distress, struck the bystanders as unfeeling and indecorous in the highest degree.* Thus pressed on all

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. vii. § 96.

* "Le Roi hésitait. Le Duc de Montpensier son fils, entrainé sans doute par l'expression énergique de la physionomie, du geste et des paroles de M. de Girardin, pressait son père avec plus de précipitation peut-être que la royauté, l'âge, et l'infortune ne le permettaient au respect d'un fils. La plume fût présentée, le règne arraché par une impatience qui n'attendait pas la pleine et libre conviction du Roi."—LAMARTINE, *Histoire de la Révolution de* 1848, i. 126.

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

sides, and incapable, from the tumult, of coming to a rational decision, the King took up the pen to sign his abdication. "Sign not," said M. Piscatory; "abdication is the republic in an hour." Marshal Bugeaud hastened in at the report of an abdication. "Never abdicate," said the old soldier; "such an act will disarm the troops; the insurrection approaches; nothing remains but to combat it." The King again hesitated; but the din in the Place Carrousel was every minute increasing, the shots were more nearly approaching the windows of the palace, and breathless messengers came in every minute announcing that all was lost, and that abdication alone could save the lives of any of the royal family. The Duke de Montpensier upon this renewed his instances with frantic energy; and the aged monarch, overcome by emotion, and hardly a free agent, signed the fatal instrument which terminated his reign.[1]*

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 25, 1848; Lamartine, i. 124, 127; Cassagnac, i. 230, 231; Regnault, iii. 412,413.

67. Proceedings of the generals at this time, and flight of the King.

While these momentous scenes, in which was terminated the rule of the Bourbons in France, were passing in the palace of the Tuileries, the generals in the Place de Carrousel were vainly endeavouring to restrain the onward pressure of the insurgents, or to prevent a conflict beginning between them and the soldiers, who, in the deepest dejection, still barred the approach to the last refuge of the monarchy. Marshal Bugeaud, on hearing the first musket-shots, mounted on horseback, and went between the combatants. An hundred voices called on him to retire, and not expose himself; but the intrepid veteran

* "J'abdique cette couronne que je tenais de la voix de la nation, et que je n'avais acceptée que pour amener la paix et la concorde parmi les Français.

"Me trouvant dans l'impossibilité d'accomplir cette tâche, je la lègue à mon petit-fils le Comte de Paris. Puisse-t-il être plus heureux que moi.—LOUIS PHILIPPE."

The following proclamation was immediately placarded over Paris:—

"ABDICATION DU ROI.
DISSOLUTION DE LA CHAMBRE.
AMNISTIE GÉNÉRALE."

By a strange omission, this placard, though genuine and emanating from authority, was unsigned.—*Moniteur*, 25th February 1847; *Ann. Hist.*, 1848, p. 267.

went on regardless of the danger, as he had been of the balls of the Moors in Africa. General Lamoricière followed in his footsteps; his horse was killed, and he himself wounded, as he was haranguing the advanced posts, and he was carried into a neighbouring house to have his wound dressed. It was all in vain. The troops, sullen and dejected, remained motionless. The insurgents, inflamed by the prospect of victory, were deaf to any other counsels but those of passion. Rapidly closing in after the retiring columns, they already almost touched the Tuileries, where the King, now nearly deserted by all except his own family, was still left. The Queen retained her courageous demeanour; the princesses were in tears. The discrowned monarch was strongly urged to declare the Duchess of Orléans regent, but he positively refused. "Others" said he, "may do so if they deem it necessary, but I will not. It would be contrary to law; and since, thank God, I have never yet been guilty of violating it, I will not begin to do so at this moment." "What then!" said the Duchess of Orléans; "will you leave me here, without relations, without friends, without counsel? What would you wish me to do?" "My dear Helen," replied the King, "the dynasty and the crown of your son are at stake; remain, then, to save the crown for him." With those words the King, with the Queen and princesses, set out to leave the palace, and the Duchess of Orléans retired into her own apartments.[1]

[1] Cassagnac, i. 232, 233; Rapport de General Trézel; Lamartine, i. 127, 129; Mr Croker, in Quarterly Review, April 1848, founded on King's information.

68. Escape of the Royal Family.

But for the precautions taken by the Duke de Nemours to secure the means of escape to the royal family, it would have been no easy matter for them to have got away, for the Tuileries was surrounded on all sides by frantic multitudes thirsting for pillage, and little disposed to spare those whom they had been taught to consider as their titled oppressors. The royal family traversed on foot, happily without being known, the broad central avenue of the Tuileries, passed the wicket of the Pont Tournant, and reached the foot of the Obelisk in the

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

Place de la Concorde at one o'clock in the afternoon. Here, however, a disappointment all but fatal awaited them. The royal carriages, which had been directed to meet them there, were not to be seen; they had been seized and burnt or knocked to pieces by the populace. Fortunately two humble cabriolets were disengaged on the quay, which was still free, and into them the august fugitives were hastily thrust, after having been rudely jostled by the mob. The carriages set off at a quick trot by the Quai de Billy, under the escort of a squadron of cuirassiers and a detachment of cavalry of the National Guard, and soon got out of Paris, taking the road to the Château d'Eu, where they hoped to arrive two days after, from whence the passage was easy to England. And thus, amidst defeat and disgrace, departed the Citizen King from Paris, and abandoned the throne of France.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. 1848, 88; Cassagnac, i. 233; Lamartine, i. 129; Moniteur, Feb. 25, 1848.

69. Heroic conduct of the Duchess of Orléans.

There remained to prop up the falling dynasty the infant Count of Paris, in whose favour the King had resigned, the Duke de Nemours his legal, and the Princess Helen, his mother and natural guardian. The former, though a prudent and sensible man, had none of the qualities fitted to struggle with the terrible crisis in which his family had become involved; but the latter, of heroic character, was well fitted for the task, and might, had she been supported with the same courage which she evinced herself, have, even at the eleventh hour, saved the throne for her son. Calm, retiring, and unobtrusive, she had, since the death of her husband, been entirely devoted to her maternal duties; but under this placid demeanour was concealed the soul of a heroine, which now prompted to noble deeds. She was soon called into action. As the troops, after the departure of the King, were retiring through the Tuileries from the Place of the Carrousel, and three cannon-shot, the last discharged on that day, fired at the mob rushing from the quay into the square, were shaking the windows of her apartment, M. Dupin, the

President of the Chamber of Deputies, entered the room. "What are you about to tell me, sir?" exclaimed the princess. "I have come to tell you," replied Dupin, with a look of hope on his countenance, "that perhaps the *rôle* of Maria-Theresa is reserved for you." "Lead the way," said the princess; "my life belongs to France and to my children." "Then there is not a moment to lose; let us go instantly to the Chamber of Deputies." They set out accordingly, the princess leading her eldest son by the hand; the second, who was not able to walk, being carried by an aide-de-camp. The Duke de Nemours walked beside them; a faithful valet named Herbert was their sole escort.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xxxi. 88, 89; Lamartine, i. 149, 152; Cassagnac, i. 235, 236.

70. Opinion in the Chamber of Deputies.

No sooner had they left the Tuileries for the hall of the legislative-body, than an impetuous mob, now wholly unresisted by the soldiers and officers on guard, broke into the palace, tore down from the walls the ensigns of royalty, and with loud shouts proclaimed a republic. Meanwhile the princess, with her scanty attendants, but soon followed by a noisy crowd, pursued her way to the Chamber. All was there uncertainty and trepidation; the departure of the King was known, but nothing more; the leaders were not to be seen; M. Thiers was absent, M. Lamartine had not yet arrived; and every one, in anxiety and terror, was waiting for some person to take the lead. M. Dupin, ascending the tribune, declared that the King had abdicated and transmitted his rights to his grandson, and to the Duchess as regent. This was not the case, as the Duke de Nemours was regent; but M. Dupin rightly judged, that when the throne itself was in jeopardy, the most popular regent was the one most likely to render success probable. Loud applause from all sides followed M. Dupin's announcement; and on his motion, the Chamber declared, by acclamation and with enthusiasm, that in respect of the resignation of the King, they declared the Count of Paris king, and his mother the Duchess regent.[2]

[2] Ann. Hist. xxxi. 91; Lamartine, i. 160, 164; Cassagnac, i. 237.

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

Loud acclamations followed this announcement, and the throne seemed saved.

71. Treachery of M. de Lamartine.

By a little courage and loyalty on the part of the popular leaders, it probably might have been so at that time. But M. de Lamartine, who had just before come up to take his seat in the assembly, was at the critical moment interrupted at the entrance of the building by a group of Republicans, fresh from the office of the *National* and the *Réforme*, who strongly appealed to the vanity which, unfortunately, not less than enthusiasm and generosity, formed a leading feature in his character, and persuaded him that the days of royalty were past, that a republic was inevitable, and that the people all looked to him to be the founder of the new order of things. Unhappily for France and for his own reputation, he yielded to their seductions and the whisperings of his own ambition, and agreed to support a republic. "There is but one way," said he to those who addressed him, "to save the people from the danger which a revolution in our present social state threatens instantly to introduce, and that is to trust ourselves to the force of the people themselves, to their reason, their interests, their arms. It is a REPUBLIC which we require! Yes," (with increased energy), "it is a republic which can alone save us from anarchy, civil war, foreign war, spoliation, the scaffold, destruction of property, the overthrow of society, the invasion of the stranger. The remedy is heroic. I know it; but there are occasions, such as those in which we live, when the only safe policy is that which is grand and audacious as the crisis itself."[1]

[1] Lamartine, i. 160, 168; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 90, 91; Cassagnac, i. 236.

72. Entrance of the Duchess of Orléans into the Chambers.

Shortly after, M. Thiers entered with consternation painted on his visage, and in the utmost agitation. "The tide is ascending," said he, raising his hat above his head; and with these words, which, coming from the Prime Minister, increased the general alarm, he disappeared in the crowd. At this moment, when the ablest and first men in France were reeling under the stroke of fate, the

folding-doors were thrown open, and the Duchess of Orléans appeared, leading her eldest son, the Count of Paris, in her right, and with her second, the Duke of Chartres, in her left. Calm and serene, the heroic princess gazed on the scene around her: with no support but her infant children and her own courage, she faced a nation in arms. The scene and her appearance must be painted in the eloquent words of an eyewitness—himself, as the event proved, the worst enemy of the princess and her race. "A respectful silence immediately ensued; the deputies in deep anxiety crowded round the august princess, the strangers in the galleries leant over in hopes of catching a word which fell from her lips. She herself was dressed in mourning; her veil, half raised, partly disclosed a countenance, the emotion and melancholy of which enhanced the charms of youth and beauty. Her pale cheeks are marked by the tears of the widow, the anxieties of the mother. No man could look on her countenance without being moved. Every feeling of resentment against the monarchy faded away before the spectacle. The blue eyes of the princess wander over the hall, as if to implore aid, and were a moment dazzled. Her slight and fragile form inclined before the sound of the applause with which she was greeted. A slight blush, the mark of the revival of hope in her bosom, tinged her cheeks; the smile of gratitude was already on her lips. She felt she was surrounded by friends. In her right hand she held the young king, in her left the Duke de Chartres; children to whom their own catastrophe was a spectacle. They were both dressed in a short black vestment. A white little collar was turned down the neck of each on his dark dress—living portraits of Vandyck, as if they had stepped out of the canvass of the children of Charles I."[1]

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

[1] Lamartine, i. 175, 176.

There was a time when such a spectacle as this—that of a young and heroic mother pleading the cause of her innocent children for the throne,—would have spoken to the heart of every man in France; when every sword

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

73. She is refused a hearing, and obliged by the mob to retire.

would have leapt from its scabbard, and, like the Hungarians of old, every voice would have exclaimed, "*Moriamur pro rege nostro Maria-Theresa.*" But Burke had said on a similar occasion, not less truly than eloquently, "The age of chivalry is past; that of sophists, economists, and calculators has succeeded." M. Dupin's motion to declare the Count of Paris king, and his mother regent, was indeed carried by acclamation; but when he proposed to register the names of the members present, in order to prevent any from drawing back, the acclamations were not so loud. At this critical moment, one of the doors of the Chamber was opened, and immediately a crowd rushed in, armed with pikes and muskets, and filled all the passages of the hall. Encouraged by the presence of these noisy supporters, the Republicans assumed bolder language; and though still only a small fraction of the assembly, they succeeded in drowning the voice of the majority. The princess said with a tremulous voice, "I have come with all I have dear in the world,"—but here the noise became such that her words were inaudible. M. Lamartine said, with hypocritical expressions, "M. President, I demand that the sitting should be suspended, from the double motive, on the one hand, of respect for the national representation; on the other, for the august princess whom we see before us." The duchess, however, who was aware that her sole chance of success consisted in remaining where she was, hesitated to withdraw. But the danger from the ferocious figures around her was so instant that she was soon in a manner forced from the place where she sat, by the Duke de Nemours, Marshal Oudinot, and the officers around her, to a higher part of the benches, near the door by which she had entered. No sooner had she done so than M. Marie exclaimed—"You cannot create a new regency to-day; the law forbids it. I demand a PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, which may take the subject into consideration along with the Chambers." M. Crémi-

eux concurred in this demand. M. Ledru-Rollin exclaimed: "You cannot create a regency in the house of the people; I protest against such an usurpation of the rights of all. Nothing can be done without it. I demand a Provisional Government, and the immediate convocation of a *convention*." M. de Lamartine began his speech by professing a chivalrous devotion for the princess; but he concluded with these words: "I demand in the name of the public peace, of the blood which has been shed, of the people famished amidst their glorious labours, that you should appoint a Provisional Government." Loud applause, especially from the mob in the passages, followed these words, and the most audacious among them, ascending the benches, levelled their muskets at the head of the princess. A scene of indescribable confusion now ensued; clamour and cries were heard on all sides; the whole Chamber in the utmost agitation rose up, the president disappeared from the chair; and the attendants of the princess, in an agony of terror for her life, in a manner forced her out of the hall.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 25, 1848; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 90, 91; Cassagnac, i. 241; Lamartine, i. 182, 201.

74. Nomination of the Provisional Government.

No sooner was the princess gone than, amidst loud cries and vociferations, the nomination of the members of the Provisional Government commenced. In this important task the Chambers were reduced to absolute nullity. Everything was determined by the cries and the gesticulations of the ferocious band of Republicans who had entered the hall, under command of Captain Dunoyer, and Lagrange, who had made himself so conspicuous the evening before at the head of the insurgents. Amidst indescribable tumult and confusion certain names were proposed to the crowd, and received with acclamations or hisses, according to the fancy of the moment or the popularity of the party proposed. M. de Lamartine, who was still in the tribune, sent down names to the persons intrusted with this taking of the votes, and named himself, MM. Marie, Ledru-Rollin, Crémieux, Dupont de l'Eure, Arago, and Garnier Pagès.[2] As these names were

[2] Moniteur, Feb. 25, 1848; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 90, 91; Cassagnac, i. 253, 254; Regnault, Gouv. Prov., c. 3; De la Hodde, 483, 484.

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

read out they were variously received with loud acclamations, or groans and hisses; but upon the whole they seemed to have the voices of the majority in the hall, and they accordingly were accepted as the Provisional Government at the Chamber of Deputies.*

75. Nomination of another Provisional Government, and proclamation of a Republic.

But while one band of insurgents was thus disposing of the government in the Chamber of Deputies, another and still more determined body was already in possession of the Hôtel de Ville, where they had proclaimed, amidst if possible still greater tumult, *another Provisional Government*, of still more Radical elements, consisting of M. Marrast, M. Flocon, M. Louis Blanc, and M. Albert, the last being a common workman and the representative of that class in Paris. It was necessary, therefore, to dispossess, and that without a moment's delay, this rival authority, for in an hour it might get the ascendancy and obtain the government of France. To the Hôtel de Ville, therefore, the first Provisional Government immediately went, surrounded by an immense crowd, and with as much parade as the circumstances would admit. When they arrived, however, they did not find their rivals disposed to yield up their newly acquired power, and a violent altercation ensued between the opposite leaders, which was on the point of coming to blows, and actually did so among their followers in the passages and stairs. Meanwhile the dense multitude which thronged the Place de Grève, outside the building, was loudly howling out for a government, and threatened instantly to break in and sack the building if the Republic was not instantly proclaimed and the Provisional Government announced.

* The following was the manner in which the vote was taken for the Provisional Government:—

"Dupont de l'Eure.—'Oui, oui!' Arago.—'Oui, oui!' Lamartine.—'Oui, oui!' Ledru-Rollin.—'Oui, oui!' Garnier Pagès.—'Oui, oui!—Non.' Marie.—'Oui!—Non!' Crémieux.—'Oui, oui!' Une voix dans la foule—'Crémieux, mais pas Garnier Pagès.' 'Si, si!—Non!' M. Ledru-Rollin—'Que ceux qui ne veulent pas lèvent la main?' 'Non, non!—Si, si!'"—DE LA HODDE, *Histoire des Sociétés Sécrètes*, p. 484.

Under the influence of this violent pressure from without, and in mutual terror, a compromise took place between the rival candidates for power, a mixed Provisional Government was nominated, composed of the leaders of both; and M. de Lamartine, from the top of the stair, called out the names and formally announced the Republic.* This declaration had the effect of, in some degree, calming the populace, who, as darkness now came on, gradually dispersed, leaving the Provisional Government, as now remodelled, in possession of the Hôtel de Ville and supreme authority. They had, however, a rude assault to sustain from a band of still more violent Republicans, who commenced an attack at midnight on the Hôtel de Ville. They were very near being forced and dispossessed of power. It was only by a strenuous exertion of personal strength that they were able to keep their ground against the assailants; and the first duty to which the rulers of France were called was the humble one of barricading the doors of the Hôtel, and putting their shoulders to the doors to keep out the mob. They did do so, however, and after a violent struggle, with success; and early next morning the Provisional Government was announced by the telegraph and the *Moniteur* to the whole country.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 24, 1848; Ann. Hist. xxxi. 94, 95; De la Hodde, 490, 500; Regnault, Gouv. Prov., c. 3; Cassagnac, i. 271, 273; Lamartine, i. 235, 240.

76. M. Lamartine's portrait of the Revolutionists.

Such was the termination of the reign of the Citizen King, and the rule of the *bourgeoisie* in France. Begun by the defection of the army, and the revolt of the middle class, it ended in the treachery of the National Guard, and the ascendant of the very lowest and most abandoned of the people. Their portrait has been drawn by the graphic hand of one who knew them well, who has left

* The Provisional Government, as arranged by this compromise at the Hôtel de Ville, was as follows:—

"President of the Council, M. Dupont de l'Eure; Foreign Affairs, M. de Lamartine; Interior, M. Ledru-Rollin; Justice, M. Crémieux; Finance, M. Goudchaux; War, M. Bedeau; Commerce, M. Marie; Public Works, M. Bethmont; Marine, M. Arago (Etienne); Public Instruction, M. Carnot; Telegraph, M. Flocon; Police, M. Caussidière; Mayor of Paris, M. Garnier Pagès."—*Ann. Hist.*, xxxi. 94, 95.

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

the following picture of the associates for whom he overturned the throne, and by whom he was for a brief period elevated to power. "They were in part composed," says Lamartine, "of galley-slaves, who had no political ideas in their heads, nor social chimeras in their hearts, but who accepted a revolution as the condition of the disorder it was to perpetuate, the blood it was to shed, the terror it was to inspire. They contained also a part of that ragged scum of the population of great cities which public commotions cause to rise to the surface, before it falls back into the common sewers from whence it had arisen; men who floated between the fumes of intoxication and the thirst for blood; who sniffed carnage while issuing from the fumes of debauchery; who never ceased to besiege the ears of the people till they got a victim thrown to them to devour. They were the scourings of the galleys and the dungeons."[1]

[1] Lamartine, Hist. de la Revolution de 1848, l. 6, c. 13, vol. i. 284.

77. Escape of the Duchess of Orléans and the Royal Family.

The Duchess of Orléans, whom M. de Lamartine had abandoned for these supporters, was rudely jostled by the crowd, and ran no small personal danger in leaving the Chamber of Deputies. Surrounded by a few faithful and courageous friends, among whom M. de Morny was the most resolute, she was with difficulty rescued from the insults and pressure of the mob, and being closely veiled, when she got to a little distance from the Chamber, she ceased to be known, and passed for one of the numerous fugitives who were flying across the streets in every direction. She was separated, however, both from the Duke de Nemours and her two sons in the throng; and the elder of the two last, being recognised, was seized by the throat by a gigantic assassin, who appeared about to strangle him, when he was torn from his grasp by a brave National Guard, and carried to the princess, who burst into tears as she embraced him. The Duke de Chartres, however, was still missing; in vain his unhappy mother called aloud for her child, and climbed up to the windows of the room into which she had been carried, to endeavour

to catch a glimpse of him amidst the agitated crowd. At length she saw him from afar, and he was brought to her arms almost fainting, for he had been thrown down in the crowd on the stair of the Chamber, and trampled under foot. The Duke de Nemours soon after joined them, having changed his dress, and assumed that of a bourgeois, in the interval; and, favoured by the darkness, the royal fugitives escaped on foot, and having met with a stray carriage in the Champs Elysées, they succeeded in prevailing on the driver to take them up, and got off. Meanwhile, the King and Queen, with the rest of the royal family, passed the first night at Dreux, one of the country-seats of the Orléans family. They continued their journey next day with all the expedition possible, by Verneuil to Evreux, where, under a feigned name, and unknown, they were hospitably entertained by a farmer on the royal forest there. The day following, they continued their flight in a berlin, drawn by two cart-horses; but fresh difficulties and dangers awaited them from the peril of being recognised in the towns lying on the road, and the King was without money, having left 350,000 francs (£14,000), in bank-notes, on his bureau by mistake in the haste of departure. The Provisional Government, however, had the humanity to send him a considerable sum to facilitate his escape; and at length, after undergoing many adventures, and performing part of the journey on foot, the King and Queen embarked at Honfleur on the 2d March, under the modest name of "*Mr and Mrs Smith.*" From thence they sailed, still unknown, to Havre, from whence, on the 3d, they embarked on board the "Express," and landed the same day at Newhaven, on the English coast. On the day following, the whole royal family was united at Claremont, in Kent, in the common asylum of European misfortune.[1]

March 2.
March 3.

[1] Ann. Hist. xxxi. 102, 104; Regnault, iii. 420, 421; Lamartine, i. 204, 280.

Two causes stand prominently forward as having been chiefly instrumental in bringing about the Revolution of

CHAP. XLVII.

1848.

1848, and the overthrow of Louis Philippe in France. These are, the defection of the National Guard, and the want of firmness in M. Thiers and the King, when Marshal Bugeaud, whose firmness was equal to the emergency,* had placed decisive success within his grasp. Had either of these events not occurred, the insurrection would with ease have been put down. But although these immense faults were the immediate cause of the catastrophe, yet we should err if we supposed that they were the remote and ultimate cause. The disaffection and treachery of the National Guard was the consequence of the incessant abuse which, during the whole course of his reign, the Liberal press had vomited forth upon Louis Philippe and his Government. This had at length come to such a pitch, that it had caused them to forget the whole real advantages they had derived from his rule, and to regard it as synonymous with everything that was base, oppressive, and corrupt among mankind. It is to the excessive violence of the Liberal press of all shades in France, during the eighteen years of his pacific and prosperous reign, that is to be ascribed the overthrow of his dynasty, and with it of the semblance even of real freedom in France.

78. Causes which brought about the Revolution.

But this violence of the Liberal press, which paralysed the National Guard in the decisive moment, was itself the effect of a more general preceding cause. This cause is to be found in the nature of its origin, and the crimes by which its early triumphs had been obtained. They now, in their natural results, brought about a deserved

79. Which was ultimately owing to its revolutionary origin.

* "Le Maréchal, qui avait eu des graves dissentiments avec le Général Lamoricière en Afrique, s'avancait vers lui et lui tendait la main. 'J'espère,' lui avait-il dit, 'mon cher Lieutenant, que nous avons laissé nos différends en Afrique, et que nous n'avons ici que notre estime mutuelle et notre dévouement à nos devoirs de soldat.' Lamoricière, digne de comprendre de telles paroles, était ému jusqu'aux larmes."—LAMARTINE, *Histoire de la Révolution*, i. 136. "Il y a déjà longtemps que j'ai prévu la crise actuelle. Je ferai mon devoir ; pour moi, j'ai brûlé mes vaisseaux."—MARECHAL BUGEAUD à M. THIERS, February 23, 1848 ; CASSAGNAC, i. 274.

but terrible retribution. It was the constant complaint of the Liberals during his whole reign, that Louis Philippe's Government was a continual denial of its origin —a shameful dereliction of its principles. That was undoubtedly true; but it was so only because that origin and those principles could never be made the foundation of a durable government. It was based on corruption, and supported by venality, because it had no other foundation on which to rest; because, having lost "the unbought loyalty of men, the cheap defence of nations," it had no resource but to appeal to their selfish desires. It maintained an immense military establishment, and was ruinously expensive, because its defiant attitude, both to the legitimate Powers of Europe and its internal enemies, imperatively required a state of constant preparation. Erected amidst the smoke of the Barricades, supported by the bayonets of the revolted National Guard, the first necessity imposed upon the Citizen King, as upon all revolutionary governments, was to coerce the passions by which his elevation had been produced. To go on indulging and fanning them would at once have landed the nation in the horrors which immediately succeeded his fall. Thence the system of resistance and coercion, which was from the first pursued, and which, by adding the bitterness of disappointment to the fervour of revolution, produced the extraordinary violence and enduring hatred of the extreme Liberals, which at length brought about his fall. Thence also the inability of the King to resist the revolt which finally overthrew his throne. The Citizen King could not withstand the insurrection of the citizens: the monarch of the Barricades could not enjoin the storming of the Barricades. His last weakness was the consequence of his first strength: he endured in the end what he had made others more innocent endure. Cradled in treachery and treason, his throne was overturned by treachery and treason. He had driven

CHAP. XLVII. 1848.

his lawful sovereign, his generous benefactor, into exile, and sent him, a discrowned wanderer, into foreign lands; and he himself was, by the consequence of his own acts, driven into exile, and sent, a discrowned and discredited fugitive, across the melancholy main, to the shores of the stranger.

END OF VOL. VII.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

00029821

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 March, 2016